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DR. JOHN PYE SMITH.*

THE late Dr. John Pye Smith occupied for more than half a century a prominent station amongst English Nonconformists, and adorned his religious profession both by varied learning and a holy life. We are glad of the opportunity which the publication of his Memoirs gives us of becoming acquainted with his personal history as well as his public labours; and we doubt not that our readers generally will sympathize in our desire of paying due respect to the memory of an accomplished Christian scholar. To read the lives of eminent men who have belonged to other communions than our own, is on many accounts profitable. We see the Christian life exhibited in phases with which we are less familiar. We must be very far or very little advanced in moral and spiritual cultivation, if we do not in every such exhibition of the Christian life find something to admire and to imitate. Where, as in the case of Dr. Smith, we are admitted to the inner life of one whom previously we had chiefly met in the tangled and briery walks of polemical divinity, we have correctives of bigotry and helps to the Christian spirit of no slight influence. If, in addition, the biography of those who have warred against our Israel, while it leaves a pleasant impression of their sincerity and personal worth, suggests some motives for being increasedlly satisfied with and grateful for our own habitual views of religious truth, attention to it is a useful study, confirming our faith as well as enlarging our charity.

Under the influence of these feelings, we call attention to an outline of the life of Dr. Smith, derived chiefly from the pages of Mr. Medway.

John Pye, son of John Smith, and Martha Sheard, his wife, was born in the town of Sheffield, May 25, 1774. Pye was the maiden name of his maternal grandmother. His great-uncle, John Pye, after whom he was named, was an Independent minister, connected, from 1745 to 1773 (when he died), with the Nether chapel of Sheffield. His father was one of a class of

* Memoirs of the Life and Writings of John Pye Smith, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S., F.G.S., late Theological Tutor of the Old College, Homerton. By John Medway. 8vo. Pp. 647. London—Jackson and Walford. 1853.

tradesmen now, to the regret of book collectors, almost extinct, at least in the provinces,—a bookseller who had his literary tastes and partialities, and who gratified them in the selection of his stock. If John Smith could not relish or comprehend the classical authors and the Greek and Latin divinity on his shelves, he nevertheless prized and loved the Puritan and Nonconformist books which were there plentifully stored. In the metropolis, such men are still to be found, possessing considerable knowledge, which they are not slow to communicate to a sympathizing customer; and it will not seldom happen that they are deacons or members of Dissenting churches. In his position as the son of a bookseller, eager for knowledge, but scarcely fortunate in the character of his early living teachers, young Smith resembled Samuel Johnson; yet the differences between them were in favour of the latter; for of Michael Johnson, the father of the lexicographer, it is said that he was “a pretty good Latin scholar.” John Smith had, like a more distinguished man, “small Latin and less Greek,”—a periphrasis for none at all. Very early in life, his gifted son revealed his appetency for study and indifference to childish sports.

“A single anecdote has been preserved of the period of his mere childhood—that at the age of five years he declared himself a man, and therefore, in his style of ‘putting away childish things,’ he plunged a knife into his drum, thus throwing it aside as a toy which no longer comported with his sense of *maturity*. A very early inaptitude for play, no doubt, characterized him. Born and nurtured as he was among books, and probably bringing with him into the world a strong predisposition for using them, his opening impulses would soon diverge from the common pastimes of a child. It is, however, not a little singular to observe how this remarkably *premature* avowal of his manliness was sustained by the freedom and vigour of his pursuits in after life.”—P. 3.

To the long and interesting list of men who have pursued knowledge and achieved distinction through difficulties and discouragements, that of Pye Smith will henceforth be deservedly added. He owed much to self-education. There was a grammar-school in Sheffield, but there is no evidence that he ever was a pupil in it. Amongst his father’s friends was a certain Rev. Jehoiada Brewer, pastor of the Queen-Street chapel, Sheffield, who, in return for the privilege of looking through magazines and other literary wares in the shop at Angel Street, undertook to teach the son, then a boy of eleven or twelve years of age, a little Latin.

“It was not, however, without difficulty that the somewhat desultory course of classical reading was persisted in. The boy had to go on errands, and at such times he would occasionally forget what he had to do, owing to the claims of a book or a lesson, over which he would be seen poring by the road side. A conflict which he had with his Virgil is also among the most current of the anecdotes of that part of his life.

Some word or passage resisted his utmost efforts to find out the meaning; he became excited, fell into a passion, threw the well-bound volume on the floor, and was not satisfied until he had kicked it almost to pieces. But in this instance, re-action answered to action; the stroke rebounded so as powerfully to affect himself. He grew patient and plodding, and for the future was careful to bring his judgment, and not his temper, to bear upon difficulties; and thenceforth he went on his way as one who had secured the secret of victory."—P. 5.

At sixteen years of age, he was bound apprentice to his father as a "bookseller, bookbinder and stationer." He completed the term of his apprenticeship, storing his mind with much valuable, though somewhat miscellaneous, knowledge. His note-books shew that biography, chronology, the history of classical literature, portions of Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Latin epigrams, general grammar, and many other topics of a similar kind, occupied his attention between his twelfth and sixteenth year.

"No such variety of works would have been within his reach at any public school: and if these had been at hand, such a use as he made of them would have been inconsistent with his drilling according to rule: nor would a domestic tutor have been justified, on more accounts than one, in thus allowing a pupil to wander away completely at will in so many directions. The bookseller's shop was his high-school; in which many works were being accumulated, not, indeed, of very ready sale at that early day in the town of Sheffield, but which served to furnish some new stimulus to the reading propensities of the boy, and in this sense were of a value far more precious than could be computed in the day-book or ledger."—Pp. 7, 8.

Here we are again reminded of an interesting parallel: "In this irregular manner," said Johnson, speaking to Boswell of his years between the school at Stourbridge and Oxford passed in his father's shop, "I had looked into a great many books which were not commonly known at the Universities, where they seldom read any books but what are put into their hands by their tutors; so that, when I came to Oxford, Dr. Adams, now master of Pembroke College, told me I was the best qualified for the University that he had ever known come there."

In a spirit as little becoming the Christian in his higher development as the scholar, Smith's biographer fanatically condemns his early studies as "far too remote from a religious tendency to warrant the impression that his diligence flowed from a proper source" (p. 8). The scholar shews his fidelity to the principles of his religion by a resolutely industrious application to the several sources of knowledge, as the merchant shews his by the uprightness and probity of his transactions; and to cast a suspicion upon the principles of either because the one does not strew prayers over the literary criticisms of his note-books, or the other mingle confessions of faith with mercantile contracts, is folly so gross, that we thought, erroneously it seems, that it was now discarded even from biographies got up for the *Evangelical* market. Dur-

ing the years of mingled service in his father's shop and private study, Pye Smith underwent the process called conversion. His first serious impressions he was accustomed to attribute to reading Alleine's *Alarm to the Unconverted*. In the paper which he drew up preparatory to admission to the church assembling at Queen-Street chapel, he made confession of great sins and violations of engagements, declaring that, till he was near sixteen years of age, "he greedily pursued after sin and drank in iniquity like water,—that his conscience had become almost entirely insensible either to the terrors of the law or the glories of the gospel." Now there is nothing whatever in Mr. Medway's account, or in the records of the spiritual life of Smith given in his own words, to justify these humiliating confessions. They were probably the mere religious verbiage of a young man of ardent temperament, endeavouring to conform himself to a certain theory of religion, and thinking it necessary to convince himself that he was a dreadful sinner before he could be accepted as a saint. There is indeed a very interesting and instructive record given of his difficulties in making his actual experience accord with the received theory of conversion. If all were as sincere and as thoroughly watchful over the workings of their own hearts as was the youthful candidate for admission to the church at Sheffield, there would probably be many similar difficulties and conflicts.

"For a long time I was greatly distressed on various accounts, principally arising from my ignorance of the nature of religion, and of the different operations of the Holy Spirit, of which the enemy of souls, no doubt, took advantage. I was firmly persuaded that I could never have real religion unless I experienced far greater degrees of terror than I had as yet known. I also imagined that after I had been for some time in such a state of distress and terror, God would in a moment communicate religion to my soul by some sudden suggestion, banishing all my fears, and filling me with the highest joys. At another time I endured very great anxiety of mind on account of a notion which I had got, that true faith consisted in a firm persuasion of my own particular interest in Christ. But I afterwards gave thanks unto God, that my first experiences were not of that kind I had so earnestly desired them to be. It was discovered to me in due time, that I must not judge of my spiritual state from violent workings of my passions, which (if God permitted) might be excited by the devil;—but from inferences deliberately drawn from a comparison of myself with the scriptural descriptions of real religion. In this manner I was enabled gradually to derive comfort and good hope through grace."—Pp. 22, 23.

Had the conscience of the young candidate been stained by the actual and deadly sins with which he had previously endeavoured to charge it, it is not probable that his sense of grace would have been brought about in this gradual, gentle and almost imperceptible manner. There was indeed no proper conversion in his case, according to all "orthodox" ideas of that mysterious

process ; but there was, what might under the circumstances be expected, a growing perception and a willing acceptance of the truths and influences of religion. Oh, what spiritual wretchedness, and, in some cases, what infidelity, would have been spared and avoided, if the representations of the rise and early progress of religion in the soul were divested of the mystery and unreality with which orthodoxy has surrounded it !

Pye Smith began his new spiritual life with the practice of keeping a diary ; but he soon discontinued it, possibly from the dissatisfaction which the perception of inconsistencies similar to that which we have pointed out would excite in his thoughtful and conscientious mind. Very early he undertook occasional itinerant religious services in the villages around his native town.

In 1792, James Montgomery settled as an entire stranger in Sheffield. One of his earliest acquaintances was the bookseller's son, who was of nearly his own age. In 1796, the acquaintance casually formed had ripened into mutual confidence and friendship. Mr. Montgomery was the proprietor of the *Iris* newspaper. In the troublous year 1795, a popular meeting at Sheffield was dispersed by the Sheffield volunteers, and in the affray two men were killed. The editor commented on the proceedings of the military as precipitate, and as leading to the unnecessary sacrifice of human life. The style of the censure of the *Iris* was what would now be deemed moderate and simply humane ; but to the rabid Toryism of Mr. Pitt's abettors in the south-west of Yorkshire, it seemed factious and libellous. Proceedings were taken against Mr. Montgomery, and at the Doncaster sessions, held January, 1796, he was found guilty of publishing a seditious libel, and received as his sentence a fine of £50 and six months' imprisonment in York Castle.

In this crisis, it was a serious question how, during the imprisonment of its editor, the *Iris* was to be conducted. It was not an easy task in those days to find one in whom were united the literary ability and the personal courage necessary for the work. It was most honourable to the friendship and public spirit of John Pye Smith, that in these circumstances he undertook and satisfactorily executed the duties of the imprisoned editor. The celebrity afterwards achieved by both these men, gives an interest to the brief notes which passed between York Castle and the printing-office, which have been preserved.

"York Castle, January 23, 1796. My dear Friend,—You have now stepped into my place, and you will not long be there before the anxieties and vexations attendant on the discharge of any painful public duty will begin to harass you."

"January 30. I am exceedingly glad to find you take so tender and active a concern in my welfare at home : give my best respects to all the men, and tell them I rely much on their diligence and friendship."

"February 13. I have little room to spare to make any further

observations respecting the *Iris*: be firm, cool, and moderate; you never can sink into dulness, if I estimate your talents right. But beware of being hurried away by generous indignation, *imprudent zeal for truth*, or the dread of censure from *any party*."

"April 2. Your letter received this morning contains no bad news, but yet it has given me inexpressible concern. It hurts me exceedingly to find, though your friendship and modesty combine to conceal it as much as possible from me, that you are very much harassed, and find great difficulty, care, and anxiety attending the discharge of that trust, which I was happy for my own sake, but uneasy from the beginning for yours, to repose in you."

"May 1. My captivity now begins to decline down the hill, and I shall only have nine weeks to stay here on Tuesday next: but I fear I shall not return immediately to Sheffield; the doctors here say it will be absolutely necessary for me to go then to Scarboro' for the benefit of sea-bathing and drinking, at least a fortnight. Of this I apprise you thus early, that if I should be obliged to go there you may be prepared to indulge me with your kind and invaluable services a few weeks longer than we expected. . . . The management and arrangement of the *Iris* has continued to afford me much satisfaction. I shall tremble when I resume it into my own hands, lest its credit should fall with the resignation of its present Editor. But tell that Editor from me not to hack and hew Pit quite so much in the London News; and to be particularly careful in the Sheffield News not to insert any *home occurrence* without the most indubitable authority."

"July 4. I take up my pen with pleasure to snatch a few of the last moments of my imprisonment, to inform you that I shall be set at liberty as early as I please to-morrow morning. Pray, insert in the next *Iris* a plain unvarnished paragraph just mentioning the circumstances, and adding that in consequence of having suffered considerably in my health during the four first months of my imprisonment, I have, by the advice of the Doctors, gone for a short time to Scarboro'; so that it will probably be a few weeks longer before I have the happiness of paying my personal respects to the friends of the *Iris*. . . . I am exceedingly impatient to return, and ease you of those irksome burdens which you have so patiently borne for me during these six unfortunate months."

"Scarboro', July 17. You will not be angry at my impertinent advice, because it is not given under the idea of instruction or injunction, but merely that some of the hints I throw out may assist you in pursuing that path of moderation and security which no man living is more capable of following than yourself. If any riots happen before my return, do not tell any dangerous truths—nor any wilful falsehoods:—the latter part of this advice is unnecessary, but you must particularly be on your guard to observe the former."—Pp. 34, 35.

However qualified by patriotic feeling for his task, Pye Smith was at this time sadly ignorant of some of the principles of political economy; for we find him in the *Iris* assigning the scarcity of provisions in part to the destruction of the old English system of small farms, and their "ingurgitation" by the rich and overgrown farmers. However objectionable this process may be on

moral grounds, its tendency, economically regarded, is the reverse of that assigned to it in the *Iris*.

During his Sheffield life, Mr. Smith had also made some acquaintance with literary men, and his biographer mentions letters to him from Roscoe and Coleridge; but as these are not names which "Evangelical" readers are wont to honour, the letters are not given, although the book abounds, usque ad nauseam, with insignificant matter relating to persons of whom few readers will care to know what they did or thought or wrote. Mr. Smith was not allowed to gratify his taste for lay preaching without some opposition at home; his father apprehended it might interfere with his business habits, and his mother, with feminine pride, feared that "preaching tradesmen" were held in contempt by the world. But his bias to religious pursuits was irresistible. He had already converted one companion brought up in Unitarian views to a belief in the Deity of Christ, and, according to his reminiscences in after life, had silenced another, who would not be converted. He had drawn up documents for the church to which he had belonged, and even printed one or two short religious tracts. In the summer of 1796, the objections entertained by his parents to his preparing for the Christian ministry were overcome, and he entered in the autumn of that year the Independent Academy near Rotherham. This seminary was one of several instituted during the last century with the professed intention of "dispelling the cloud of Socinian darkness, then spreading over the northern counties of England," and was at that time conducted by Dr. Edward Williams, assisted in the classical department by Rev. Maurice Philips. Smith was far in advance of his companions (not exceeding ten or twelve in number) in general attainments, having, in addition to his knowledge of languages, some skill in natural history, anatomy and even medicine. The latter he had probably picked up in his intercourse with the Unitarian medical students already referred to. His venturing to prescribe for his fellow-students, though praised by his biographer, was a very questionable "act of friendship." In the winter of 1796 and 1797, his first session at the Academy, he read lectures to his companions on the human mind,—a circumstance which conspires with other known facts to give a not exalted idea of the literary and philosophical standard of the Academy. He also lectured on anatomy, and had his tutors as part of his audience. He cultivated miscellaneous reading, visited in the godly families round about, declaimed in the rostra, and preached to small congregations in the neighbourhood. With so many distracting influences, it is surprising that he rose to distinction as a scholar. He was happily possessed of quick perception, a retentive memory, and the habit of accurate generalization. But however he was enabled by after study to rectify the consequences of his ill-regulated literary career at the

Rotherham Academy, there can be no doubt that in after life he felt and lamented them. To this period, rather than to that of his apprenticeship, as suggested by his biographer, we should be disposed to assign his lament at the close of life over "purposes conceived in sanguine eagerness or sinful self-reliance, irregular plans, fragmentary studies, foolish vagrancy of literary ambition, the sure disappointment of endeavouring to grasp too much in given limits" (p. 8, *note*).

Shortly before the completion of the curriculum at Rotherham, he wavered for a time between several plans; first thinking of spending a winter at Aberdeen, and then of undertaking the office of classical and philosophical tutor in Coward's College at Wymondley; with a view to which, he spent some weeks, towards the close of 1799, in Hertfordshire. His biographer conjectures, with infelicitous blundering, that the proposed engagement was broken off in consequence of the Coward Trustees detecting in the young tutor symptoms of "*decision of character*," which might have proved inconvenient. He finds consolation in the fact, that there were amongst these Trustees certain *Arians*, from whom he conjectures Pye Smith would have received annoyance, who, though "persons of the strictest probity," were "not suited to his order of religious creed or feeling." He next contemplated entering on the pastoral office at Chester, where his pulpit services were received with eager acceptance; but before the engagement was formed, a new and to him more interesting prospect of usefulness opened, by the application of the managers of the Homerton College to undertake the classical professorship about to be vacated by Rev. John Berry. The Homerton College was managed by a committee who represented the remains of two institutions which even half a century ago were venerable,—the Congregational Fund Board, established in 1695, and the King's Head Society, established in 1730. Their leading object was to promulgate the Calvinistic system of theology set forth in the Westminster Catechism. Tutors of some celebrity had adorned the academical institutions carried on by these two societies, amongst whom may be named Mr. John Eames, Dr. John Walker, Dr. Zephaniah Marryatt, Dr. Conder and Dr. Gibbons. On the fifth day of the present century, John Pye Smith entered the house appropriated to the College at Homerton, undertaking, together with the classical tutorship, the conduct of the domestic establishment for the pupils. Though styled Classical Tutor, the duties actually assigned to or voluntarily undertaken by him ranged far and wide. From the inaugural address delivered by him, it appears that he undertook, in addition to Classical studies, instruction in the several branches of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Natural History, Geology and Mineralogy, Logic, Mental Philosophy, English Composition and Belles Lettres, History and Mathematics. Not satisfied

with this extraordinary outline of studies, which none but an Admirable Crichton could successfully complete, Pye Smith must needs make a not inconsiderable inroad on the functions of the Theological Tutor, by giving a course of lectures on the Greek Testament, designed to teach the principles of sacred philology and biblical criticism. When it is remembered that this was undertaken by a man not thirty years of age, who, until after he was of age, had enjoyed none of the benefits of systematic intellectual training, although, with our modern ideas founded on a minute subdivision of studies, we cannot entirely acquit the young Professor of excessive self-reliance, we must at least admit his courageous literary ambition. There was some moral courage, too, at that time of day, in the Professor's devoting so large a portion of his students' attention to Nature and its philosophy; for in the eyes of some "Evangelical" Dissenters, Mr. Medway informs us, a large acquaintance with God's works was regarded with jealousy, as endangering faith in God's word. With a rhetoric somewhat juvenile, the biographer remarks:

"There was no man who had a clearer, deeper conviction than Mr. Pye Smith that these fears were really without foundation. His Theism and his Christianity—the Book of Nature and the Bible—rested on a common basis—deserved the same credit—and culminated in the glory of the One Great and Adorable Jehovah. He could not tremble therefore, nor even doubt amidst the records of the creation. Some of the rooms might be dark, but none was haunted: and if even a human hand was reverently used to take down a shutter, much light would enter, and there would be less for the timid to fear ever after."—P. 84.

The circumstances under which he began the experiment of housekeeping, were such as might have alarmed an experienced family economist. Wheat was about 116s. per quarter, and the other necessities of life were proportionately dear. The scale of allowance from the College Committee for each student, never very liberal, had been arranged in times of comparative cheapness, and was now insufficient for the necessary outlay. Though aided in his domestic arrangements, to the utmost of her power, by a sister, it was not surprising that he felt the anxieties springing from the *res angustæ domi*, and sought for increased means and a skilled superintendent of his domestic establishment. It was his misfortune, in this juncture of affairs, to meet with a lady of attractive manners and other charms,—a recently-associated member of a Dissenting church in the city of London, but who had previously partaken freely of the innocent gaieties of life. They met in January, and as the wooing sped with fatal precipitancy, they became engaged in May and wedded in August. With the experience of more than thirty years, during several of which she had been in the unrestricted enjoyment of her property, she had acquired a knowledge of life and character, and a habit of decision and command, which under any circumstances

augured ill for domestic peace. There were peculiarities in Mr. Smith's case, which deprived him of all power in resisting the domestic tyranny under which he laboured for thirty years. He was several years her junior,* little skilled in the world's lore, perfectly incapable of reading character, very amiable, without decision, possessing no wealth to weigh against the fortune brought him by his bride, save his knowledge and his goodness, and these to a vulgar mind have no marketable value. Within a week or two of this little-pondered marriage, the College session began, and Mrs. Smith was called to enter on a series of distasteful duties, for which she was little qualified, and to the successful performance of which women of both sense and temper have sometimes confessed themselves unequal. Misunderstandings speedily arose between the Professor's lady and the students, and he, it appears, was involved in them from the foolish practice, which he now adopted and continued in after years, of "acting as the bearer of messages of reproof or displeasure from Mrs. Smith to other persons." Discomfort reigned in the establishment, and in 1807, subsequently to some proceedings of a sub-committee of inquiry, Mr. Smith suddenly resigned his office as resident at the College. This was not merely a case of want of sympathy with her husband's position and honourable duties, but of a dreary system of perpetual exactions, complainings and jealousies. These grew with indulgence, and to such a height, that he was cut off from the society of friends, forced to retrench his charities and even his epistolary correspondence, and compelled to devote a large portion of his valuable time to soothing the irritations and peevishness of an imperious and very foolish woman. The Homerton Professor was only one of many distinguished men who have made shipwreck of their happiness by an ill-assorted marriage union. "If the literary man," it has been remarked, "unite himself to a woman whose taste and whose temper are adverse to his pursuits, he must courageously prepare for a martyrdom." To the truth of this statement, the lives of Milton, Salmasius, Dante, Moliere, Dryden, Whitelock, Bishop Cooper, Sir Thomas More, Sir Henry Saville, "the judicious" Hooker and many others bear testimony. Our amiable divine had not the courage and tact of Pasquier the epigrammatist, who, finding himself united to a stormy shrew, out-stormed and out-scolded her, but still bewailed his fate in the exclamation, "Unfortunate wretch that I am, I who am a lover of universal peace! But to

* Against marriage unions in which the contracting parties are "misgraffed in respect of years," Shakespeare, the keenest observer of life, has pronounced his verdict. Some have thought he spoke from personal experience of the unhappy result of the conjuncture of unequal years where the wife is the older:

"Let still the woman take
An elder than herself. So wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart," &c.

have peace, I am obliged ever to be at war." Mr. Smith followed the submissive resignation of Salmasius, in respect to whom it is said, that his royal patroness, Christina, on becoming acquainted with the miseries he suffered from a termagant wife, professed that she admired his patience even more than his erudition. In such a sentiment the biographer before us appears to concur, if we understand aright his verbose homily on Pye Smith's *magnanimity* in submitting to domestic tyranny rather than appear to break his marriage vow of tender affection. That affection could survive such a series of shocks, we must be permitted to doubt, whatever statements to the contrary may proceed either from the biographer or his subject. Passive obedience did not procure him domestic peace; resistance could scarcely have increased, and might have mitigated, his domestic troubles. At all events, he was bound by clear moral principle to resist where uxorious demands trenched on his duties to others, and diminished his respectability and usefulness as a tutor and a pastor. It is impossible to refuse our pity to this much-wronged scholar, when we read in the Preface to one of his books a statement of a large measure of disabilities and hindrances from private duties and afflictions. "These," he adds, "have consumed the fragments of time, and have kept the capacity of exertion constantly filled. These have produced such disappointments of hope, such destruction of hours, such weariness and discouragement of mind, as, notwithstanding the conviction of truth and the obligations of promise, have often induced him to throw aside his work for many weeks and months, and have scarcely allowed any other than short and unfavourable pittance of time for pursuing it. When the will to labour has been most vigorous, the necessary time has been above the writer's reach; and too often when the opportunity has been presented, he was labouring under the incapacity of dejection and reluctance" (pp. 100, 101).

In Mr. Medway's homily on the subject, we are invited to contemplate "the operation of a Divine Hand" in Mr. Smith's domestic miseries,—to believe that there was a special Providence at work, educing out of his probation a noble character and a great example. We submit that one topic of the homily should have been, that Providence designs to teach, by instances of this kind, that if men rush hastily and inconsiderately into any of the more important connections and relations of life, they may expose themselves to disappointment and wretchedness; and that especially, if in choosing a partner for life they allow mere beauty or vivacity or a convenient portion to sway their predilections, to the exclusion of more important qualities of mind and character, they must blame, not Providence, but themselves.

We have dwelt at some length on this case of domestic unhappiness, because there is a theological specialty growing out of it, which has no unimportant bearing on the reality and truth

of the religious system in accordance with which Mr. Pye Smith's theories, sentiments and practices were habitually moulded.

In November 1832, the unhappy union was brought to a close by the lady's death. On his part, the biographer tells us, there was no "unseemly elation of spirit or manner, much less any verbal allusions by which the world could be informed of a pleasing change having lately occurred at Homerton. No; it was impossible for so sincere a man, so fine a nature, so devout a Christian, *to grow loquacious and vulgar*"! All this was fitting and decent; but there is preserved in this volume a letter from Dr. Smith, which goes very far beyond this, and is calculated to excite some thoughts far from favourable to what is called "Evangelical" religion. In reading the letter, it will be borne in mind that the italics are the reviewer's.

"Homerton, Monday, Nov. 26, 1832.

"Rev. and dear Sir,—It has pleased the High and Holy One, to take to Himself my late beloved wife, on Friday night, after a long and distressing illness. I have a comforting hope, I venture to say a persuasion, that she has departed to be with Christ. . . . That *the grace of Christ had place in her heart* is my belief; and I had more complete means of knowledge than any other person could have: but the actings and habits of the Divine principle were lamentably obstructed by that most extraordinary, indeed almost unexampled, peculiarity of temperament which, with inexhaustible versatility, created its own miseries, in opposition to palpable facts and the plainest evidence. This deprived her of happiness in the midst of its ample means, and shed a melancholy blight upon those relationships and circumstances of life which, duly considered and wisely improved, would have been materials for abounding joy and constant gratitude. After the experience of thirty years, *I cannot, in this instance, doubt the permitted 'power of darkness' as an auxiliary cause of breaking to potsherds the comfort and usefulness of one who yet clung in faith and prayer to Him who saves invincibly.* Can I do other than rejoice beyond expression in the confidence that, when she quitted the earthly tabernacle, she dropped the veil of till then impregnable error, and now praises her glorious Deliverer for the glad development."—P. 348.

The charitable feeling in which this letter originated is deserving of high admiration; but admitting this, it is our duty to remark on its theological inconsistencies, and on the view which it presents of some of the practical bearings of the "Evangelical" system of faith.

Here is the case of one who is admitted, even in this tenderly apologetic letter, to have cast, by her selfishness and cruelty, "a melancholy blight upon the relationships and circumstances of life," and to have turned materials for abounding joy and constant gratitude into means of wretchedness to all whom she could affect. Notwithstanding this, Dr. Smith could believe that the grace of Christ had a place in her heart, and that she clung in faith and prayer to Him who saves invincibly;—that is to say,

faith and prayer, and the grace of Christ, and consequent salvation, may consist with the absence of every practical grace and amiable quality of the Christian character. There is a barren faith, and that will suffice to effect salvation.

To put this very important subject in another light, before the close of his life Dr. Pye Smith reviewed a volume of sermons by a distinguished Unitarian, whose religion was displayed in a life of practical beneficence, and by innumerable excellences of temper and life. All these things were known to and admitted by the reviewer, who had during the life of the Unitarian cherished "sincere friendship" towards him. In this case, Christian sincerity extorted from Dr. Smith (and herein he is commended by his biographer) a deliberate denial of the privileges of the gospel:

"It is our solemn and heartfelt conviction that the essence of the gospel is exterminated, and its blessings intercepted by those who reject the proper Deity of our Saviour's pre-existent nature, the propitiation for the sins of the world by his sacrificial offering up of Himself, the infinite value of His obedience, and the influence of His Spirit in the production and maturing of a holy character."—P. 456.

That is to say, according to the "Evangelical" creed, there is little ground for hope in behalf of that man whose creed is wrong or defective on Christ's deity and atonement, and on the work of the Spirit, however pure, beneficent and godly his life may have been.

But then there is, in the one case, the charitable loophole of the *permitted power of darkness*, by which we suppose is meant the permitted temptations of Satan. But is it a necessary part of the "orthodox" theory that the power of darkness can pervert the temper and affections, but is not able to overcloud the understanding? Why may not an erroneous or defective creed be set down to Satan's actings, as well as a selfish heart and a vindictive temper? Possibly orthodoxy, when disposed to be charitable and hopeful, may admit such a plea in behalf of the supposed heretic, but may think it inexpedient to suggest palliations for such enormities as misbelief and unbelief. Be the explanation what it may, there is either an enormous theological inconsistency or gross exaggeration in the popular representations of the damnableness of misbelief. Or there may be some mysterious explanation, accessible only to orthodox or Hegelian minds, respecting the power of darkness that is "permitted," and that which defies the Divine decrees.

We have tarried so long over this portion of the "Memoirs," that we can only offer a very brief outline of what remains.

On undertaking the Professorial office, Pye Smith had made it a condition not to be precluded from pastoral duties, should the opportunity of advantageously undertaking them arise. The religious services at the College were attended by a few neigh-

bours and friends, who desired to form themselves, together with the students, into an Independent church. From the College hall, this infant society removed to a room in a house in the neighbourhood, where considerable accessions to their numbers were gradually made; and in the end, the society secured the Old Gravel-Pit meeting-house, in which Dr. Price, Dr. Priestley, Mr. Belsham, Mr. Kentish and Mr. Aspland had successively ministered, now vacant by the removal of the Unitarian congregation, in 1810, to a meeting-house of their own in the immediate neighbourhood. The pulpit services of Pye Smith were plain, scriptural and devout; his sermons possessed little that could be called eloquence, nor were they often characterized by large or comprehensive views of the subjects treated; but, on the other hand, they were textual and practical, and bore the impress of the preacher's earnest sincerity, and were generally regarded as edifying and acceptable by persons of the Calvinistic persuasion. His assumption of the pastoral office was celebrated by a public ordination service at the meeting-house in New Broad Street, London. His confession of faith was purposely drawn up in language *not scriptural*, to avoid, as he stated, ambiguity and concealed error. He professed belief in the true, proper and everlasting Deity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and added his belief that "these scriptural terms were designedly expressive of a real plurality of subsistence in the One Godhead, a Trinity of Persons in the perfect Unity of Essence." With a chivalric orthodoxy, he professed his belief that the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity was *by no means antecedently incredible to the soundest dictates of reason*. How such a statement could be honestly made (and that it was made with unreserved sincerity, we do not in the least question) by a person of disciplined intellect and acquainted with the exact forms of scientific definition, is one of those perplexing mysteries which futurity alone can unravel.

In the year 1804, Mr. Pye Smith began the series of publications on controversial subjects with which his fame and popularity have been so largely associated, by printing Letters to Mr. Belsham, in reply to that gentleman's Funeral Sermon for Dr. Priestley. The chief points attempted were to repudiate Mr. Belsham's description of the Calvinistic faith, and to controvert the claims set up for Priestley as a scholar and a theologian. The Letters were written "upon the whole" (the concession is Mr. Belsham's) "with much personal civility, and with as much candour as the spirit of his theological system will admit." Some of the more truculent spirits of his own creed, on both sides of the Atlantic, complained that in these Letters to Belsham, and in other controversial writings against Unitarians, Pye Smith was "too mild, too courteous." His biographer does not quite concur in this view, but praises the modest diffidence of his friend. Mr. Belsham, on the contrary, complained (and brought

forward proofs to sustain the charge) of the "tone of authority, the air of triumph, and the parade of learning," improperly assumed by his critic. Mr. Belsham's letters in defence of his statements, originally published in the *Universal Theological Magazine*, are masterly specimens of controversial writing,—clear, calm, logical, learned,—and every now and then pungently witty. They had the effect of modifying Mr. Smith's attack on one point; and, much to his credit, that gentleman, in a subsequent edition of his *Letters*, acknowledged that he had "egregiously misapprehended Mr. Belsham's meaning."

In the beginning of 1805, the first number of the *Eclectic Review* made its appearance,—a periodical to which Pye Smith became a frequent contributor. Amongst his early contributions was a review of Priestley's *Notes on Scripture*, in which he assails, with more vehemence than success, the historical mode of interpreting scripture. With offensive dogmatism, Mr. Medway introduces this topic in these words: "Socinian and other writers often attempt to impugn the authority of much that is found in the New Testament by ascribing it to circumstances which were local or temporary." Mr. Medway ought to know that *Unitarians* who, like Priestley and Belsham, draw their religious system from the Scriptures, do not impugn the authority of the New Testament, although they are sometimes impelled to impugn popular expositions of its doctrine. Another article of Pye Smith's was a review of Priestley's *Autobiography*, in the course of which Dr. P.'s account of the free inquiry pursued at Daventry is commented on in a singularly declamatory style. The reviewer denied that the religious inquiry there carried on was either free or favourable to the serious pursuit of truth. He called it "a polluted soil," sending forth "mephitic exhalations," in which "no HOLY DISPOSITION can possibly flourish." Pharisaic exaggerations of this kind are the exceptions to Pye Smith's ordinary style of controversy: imputations upon motives, and the tracing of supposed errors of the creed to the heart, when used by disputants, who have no power of reading the thoughts of those whom they denounce, are not only unjustifiable arts of controversy, but are simply ridiculous. At a somewhat later period he reviewed in the same journal the *Improved Version*, and Dr. Middleton on the Greek Article.

On the retirement, in 1805, of Rev. James Knight, the Theological Tutor, he succeeded, at first indeed only provisionally, to the vacant post.

In 1807, he received a diploma of D.D. from Yale College, a compliment paid in reward for his *Letters to Belsham*. In this same year he took large part in founding the Protestant Dissenting Grammar-school at Mill Hill. In 1812, Dr. Pye Smith's "orthodoxy" fell into suspicion, partly in consequence of his temporarily swerving from the doctrine of an intermediate state.

It reveals the state of spiritual bondage in which orthodox ministers were kept forty years ago, and in some churches we fear still are, that the candid expression from the pulpit of uncertainty and hesitation on a philosophical subject of this kind, on which the Scriptures give so little information, should excite a storm of disapprobation and misrepresentation, which in Dr. Smith's case was dissipated only by the tedious and humiliating process of a committee of inquiry. Having gone through this quarantine, and proved to the satisfaction of nine out of eleven of the spiritual policemen to whom the case was entrusted, that he could shew an orthodox bill of health, they endorsed his papers as decidedly Calvinistic. Against the two dissentients he afterwards had to vindicate the soundness of his faith through the press.

It was not until the year 1818, that the first portion of Dr. Smith's *opus magnum*, the "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah," was published. It was begun as far back as 1811, and was designed as an answer to Mr. Belsham's "Calm Inquiry into the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Person of Christ." Unlike Mr. Belsham's calm and masterly book, in which conflicting interpretations are placed side by side, stated with rare impartiality, and the balance judicially struck, Dr. Smith's Scripture Testimony takes the orthodox view of Christ's Deity for granted, and proceeds to collect passages in confirmation thereof. To those who study only one side of the question, and who attend more to the number of proofs adduced than to their specific weight, the Scripture Testimony will probably appear conclusive. It has, we know, been studied by some unprejudiced inquirers concurrently with the Scriptures, and the result has been a conclusion directly the reverse of the popular faith.

Of Dr. Smith's controversy with Haldane, and of the consequent attack upon him for neology and heresy by Haldane's friend, Dr. Carson, little need be said beyond this, that the knowledge and the temper were chiefly on the side of the Homerton tutor.

In 1828, Dr. Smith published the first edition of his "Four Discourses on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ, and on Atonement and Redemption." This work was a republication in an enlarged form of a sermon preached as far back as 1813, which on its first appearance received a reply from Mr. W. J. Fox, who had been a pupil at the Homerton College. To Mr. Fox's letters, which were respectful in tone and both scriptural and logical in their texture, no reply was attempted; and the total silence on the subject of Mr. Fox's very powerfully-argued objection to Dr. Smith's representations of the nature of Jewish sacrifices, and of the atoning virtues of the sacrifice of Christ, is a remarkable fact in his literary history.

We must pass over Dr. Smith's long controversy with Dr.

Samuel Lee on religion and religious establishments, and various minor publications and events in his pastoral and domestic life, to mention his contributions to the science of Geology. He had become a Fellow of the Geological Society in 1836, and attended its meetings with regularity and interest. In the grand truths of this progressive science, Dr. Pye Smith had taken a very deep interest. He was well aware that the ascertained facts of Geology required for their explanation a *pre-Adamitic* theory, and he did not conceal from himself and others that this was at variance with the hitherto received interpretation of the history of creation in Genesis. With a mind honourably open to conviction on the presentation to it of new evidence, he deliberately revised his opinions of the Mosaic doctrine respecting creation, and gave the first public expression of the views by which he, to his own satisfaction, brought scientific truth into harmony with the Bible, in a lecture to young men, delivered in a London chapel in the autumn of 1837. Taking for his text Gen. i. 1, he observed,

“‘The passage which has been read I regard as a grand universal assertion, the first axiom of natural and religious knowledge. ‘In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.’ But it does not tell us WHEN that beginning was. It assures us that at a point in duration past, which we cannot ascertain; at that point in infinite duration which to the wisdom of the great God seemed best, He was pleased to give existence to a dependent world; unfolding the majesty of His attributes, and creating intelligent beings capable of contemplating and enjoying them.’—*Lect.* pp. 14, 15. This position is briefly illustrated by arguments drawn from scientific sources, and also from the condition of the first human pair. The six days of the following verses, are treated as natural days of about twenty-four hours in length; and intimations are given respecting the antiquity of the strata of the earth’s crust with their embedded fossils, tending to the conclusion that life and death, in connection with our globe, must have been *pre-Adamitic*.”—P. 412.

In 1839, he delivered the annual Congregational Lecture, and with a wisdom and courage, the amount of which it is not easy for persons to estimate who have been trained in societies where free inquiry is habitual, he chose the subject of Scripture and Geology. He enumerated six points in which, it was imagined, the doctrines of Geology were opposed to Scripture facts:

“I. The recent creation of the world. II. A previous universal chaos over the earth. III. The creation of the heavenly bodies after that of the earth. IV. The derivation of all vegetables and animals from one centre of creation. V. That the inferior animals were not subject to death till the fall of man. VI. Concerning the Deluge.”—P. 432.

He then mentions

“Four different methods to set aside the alleged contradictions between

the observed phenomena and the Bible:—‘I. The denial of any difficulty, by shutting the eyes to the evidence of geological facts, and representing the inquiry as impious:—II. Sacrificing the Mosaic records as unintelligible, or as being the language of mythic poetry:—III. Regarding the Mosaic six days as designed to represent indefinite periods:—IV. Attributing stratification and other geological phenomena to the interval between the Adamic creation and the Deluge, and the action of the Diluvial waters.’ Each of these is examined in order, and is shown to be either untenable in itself, or inadmissible in principle. Against the *first*, there is the practical objection that inquiry cannot be prevented, and the moral and rational one, that it ought not. The *second*, rather evades the text than explains it; or if exposition is attempted, the superstructure can never be solid on a myth—which is no better than a mist—for a foundation. To make, according to the *third*, the six days to represent periods of vast but undefined duration, seems like an attempt to carry back the *historical* details of the creation to a point in the infinite past, beyond all calculation remote from the subsequent portions of the Mosaic narrative. The axiom in the first verse appears to stand quite apart from the rest, in a sort of isolated simplicity and majesty; as though it proclaimed the only communicable fact which mortals could either need or receive from that boundless period of duration which was anterior to the birth of the human race. With the second and following verses, *history* begins; but that could scarcely be the case, if these verses relate to events which transpired at an immeasurable distance prior to the time when man was created. The *fourth* and last method of accounting for geological phenomena, is never likely to find support, except from persons who either know nothing of them, or know them in a very partial form.”—Pp. 423, 424.

Although liberal theologians have not unanimously accorded with Dr. Pye Smith’s interpretation of the Mosaic history, and some of the not least intelligent friends of both Scripture and Science have preferred the solution, that the Bible does not contain, nor profess to contain, a revelation of *scientific* truth, it must be felt and thankfully conceded that Dr. Pye Smith rendered in this work a very important service to science. None but a man of considerable authority, and of undoubted soundness in the faith, could have put down the outcries of a fanatical “orthodoxy,” alarmed at the prospect of being undermined by the advance of science. His name and authority were a broad and strong shield, beneath the cover of which geologists have since pursued their useful and profoundly interesting inquiries in comparative peace. By some of the obscure “Evangelical” clergy of London, Dr. Smith was denounced for the part he took on this question, as an assailant of God’s word and the propounder of blasphemous tenets. By the Dissenting clergy, his views, if not cordially accepted, were silently acquiesced in. Dr. Smith received an appropriate reward by being elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

In 1837, Dr. Smith took the opportunity of the publication of a new edition of the “Scripture Testimony,” to revise his opinions

on the authenticity of Solomon's Song, and came to the conclusion that the principle which he had propounded concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures could not be applied to this book. He also resisted the popular system of allegorical interpretation applied to the Canticles. "I can conceive of no method," he observes, "of treating written documents that is more arbitrary, precarious and destructive of certainty. By it the whole testimony of the Scriptures might be broken up, the use of language would be exploded, and any words might be made to signify anything." He comes to the conclusion that it was a pastoral eclogue, representing, in the vivid colours of Asiatic rural scenery, with a splendour of artificial decoration, the honourable lives of a newly-married bride and bridegroom, with some other interlocutors.

Dr. Smith's views on the Song of Solomon were sharply attacked by some of his brethren. The principal opponent was Dr. James Bennett, who reproached him with allowing German neologists, whose fundamental principles were "false," and whose errors were "dreadful," to have too much influence over him. We cannot enter into the details of this controversy. Its result was, that Dr. Smith, though still unconvinced of the spiritual character of this book, admitted its canonical claims, and we regret to say that at the end of the ten years' siege against his supposed neology, he capitulated with his assailants and withdrew the disquisition from the edition of the Scripture Testimony published in 1847. His biographer, with that faculty of blundering to which we have before alluded, commends the judgment and Christian courage of his author.

We have left ourselves no room to speak in detail of Dr. Smith's various public services in other walks than of sacred literature. He was a conscientious distributor of the Parliamentary Grant, and to the close of his life resisted the efforts made by his brethren of the Independent persuasion to detach him from this philanthropic labour. His politics were firmly liberal. On the subject of the removal of the Corn Laws, he upheld with unfaltering zeal the policy of Mr. Cobden. To various societies he gave his countenance and aid. For many years he was a frequent attendant at the annual meetings of the British Association for promoting Science. He was afflicted for the greater part of his ministerial life with deafness, which sadly diminished his power of usefulness in oral discussion, and generally in public meetings. When the Dissenters' Chapels Bill was before Parliament, he declined to enrol himself amongst its opponents, and declared to the leading members of his flock his belief that opposition to it would not be right, and would injuriously affect the Independent body. Mr. Medway, in mentioning the circumstance, finds consolation, on taking a cursory glance at the history of the Unitarian party during the last seven or eight years, to observe

that the property secured by the Act has imparted no new probability or popularity to Unitarian doctrines. Unitarians are, we believe, prepared to abide in what they regard as truth, however unpopular its profession may be, and are not so simple as to imagine that an Act of Parliament will confer "new probability" on any religious system.

While giving to Dr. Smith all the praise to which he is entitled, whether on the score of principle or prudence, for his neutrality on the subject of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, we are bound in historical justice to express our emphatic lament that he did not abstain from a participation in the Hewley suit, an unrighteous litigation, which was in great measure the occasion of the Chapels Bill. One would gladly, if possible, forget the affidavits of Dr. Pye Smith and others, in which a far-fetched theological affinity was attempted to be proved between the Presbyterians of the seventeenth and the Independents of the nineteenth century. Notwithstanding Dr. Smith's frequent controversial assaults on Unitarians, and the painful feelings which arose out of the Hewley suit and other similar proceedings on the part of "orthodox" Dissenters, resulting in the formal separation of the Presbyterians from the other two denominations,* it may be confidently stated that his personal friendship with several Unitarians, both neighbours and others, continued, not merely unbroken, but warm, to the close of life. Between himself and the then Unitarian pastor of Hackney, his neighbour for forty years, there was habitual friendly and even closely confidential intercourse.

Dr. Smith's closing years were cheered by conjugal affection. His second wife was the widow of Rev. William Clayton. The marriage took place in January 1843, and Mr. Medway states that "the connection proved an eminent benefit and solace to him to the end of life." He became once more resident Tutor at the College, with eminent advantage to the institution. He also undertook the labour of the College Secretaryship, a remarkable proof of his laborious zeal and energy.

In 1844, his varied and pressing labours were suspended by illness, and he found it expedient to discontinue the afternoon service at his chapel. In 1846, he received the desirable aid of the services of a co-pastor. In January 1849, there is a very touching entry in the College Diary, in which he records the fact of his being disabled by a stroke of paralysis, with which his Heavenly Master gently smote him on Tuesday, 2nd. On some subsequent day, there is the entry, "resigned to quietude." His strength afterwards rallied, but the end was now not far distant. His labours as a pastor were brought to a close on the last Sunday

* It was to Dr. Pye Smith that the late Mr. Aspland addressed the striking letter of remonstrance respecting the coarse bigotry of his associates, preserved in his *Memoirs*, pp. 540, 541.

in 1849. His Professorial life continued a little longer, and with its termination the College of Homerton was also brought to a close, being merged in the larger establishment of New College. He prepared the address at the laying of the first stone in May 1850, which was read by Dr. Smith.

A valuable testimonial, presented to him at a public meeting in January 1851, served to mark the deep impression which his public labours of half a century had made. It was his last public appearance. He retired to Guildford, where, after a few weeks of feeble existence, he sank to rest on Wednesday, February 5, 1851, having attained the age of seventy-six years, eight months and eleven days. His remains were deposited, with every accompanying token of affectionate reverence, in Abney Park Cemetery.

In parting with our subject, we would record emphatically our conviction of Dr. Pye Smith's eminent goodness and piety, and express our regret that what might have been a pleasing and interesting biography of him, has been marred by the bad taste and literary incompetence displayed in almost every chapter by Mr. John Medway.

MODERN CHURCHES AND PREACHERS.*

IN this little volume, the author goes somewhat cursorily over a great deal of ground, but utters many home truths with the simplicity of earnest eloquence. He naturally looks at the religious wants of the age very much from his point of view as a Congregationalist minister, and at times speaks, apparently from personal experience, with the bitterness of wounded feeling; but there is manifest throughout perfect honesty and seriousness of purpose, and a rational, independent judgment. We understand that the author has done good service in the promotion of moral and social reforms, and his book gives ample evidence that he makes more account of the weightier matters of the law than of niceties of speculative doctrine. There is much in this unpretending volume which ministers and members of all religious denominations, and more especially candidates for the ministry, may with great advantage read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. We have, indeed, seldom read a work more likely to deter a sensible, conscientious youth from devoting himself to the ministry lightly, or with any other than the highest and purest motives, and in the uncompromising spirit of Christian self-devotion. The author's indignation, however, occasionally leads him

* *The Churches for the Times, and the Preachers for the People, &c.* By William Ferguson, Bicester, Oxon. 12mo. Pp. 308. London—B. L. Green. 1853.

into amusing magniloquence. Thus, in his Preface, after speaking of the tyranny and espionage to which ministers have in some instances been subject, he says,

"Let the accusers and crushers of their brethren keep in mind, that the unseemly—not to say, ungodly—proceedings, by which so many of the Dissenting Churches of this country are characterized, have produced an electric shock along the terrestrial line, from John O'Groat's to the centre of Australia; and the sighs of insulted and injured virtue, have been heard in heaven; and have produced a reverberation from the throne of God, to the depth of wounded humanity. The Author means more than he states."—Pref., p. xix.

His first chapter is devoted to the comprehensive theme, "The History and Authenticity of the Sacred Scriptures," on which he gives as much information as can be expected in twenty-six small pages. He maintains that "it requires more faith to be a consistent infidel than to be a real Christian" (p. 2). He has some sensible remarks on the *pros* and *cons* of the division into chapters and verses, and altogether there is not much to object to, with the exception of a few apparent slips of memory as to names, such as "Syminachus," "Jahan" and "Landisferu," instead of Symmachus, Jahn and Lindisfarne. In Chap. ii., on "Divine Inspiration," he does not maintain that the Bible, as a whole, is a divine revelation, though, in the case of the prophets and apostles, he maintains the impossibility of any distinction between general and verbal inspiration. There is much good sense in Chap. iii., in which he dwells on the mischief and absurdity of fanciful, allegorical explanations, though he affirms broadly the doctrine of Types. In dwelling on the importance of prayer for the illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit in the study of Scripture doctrine, he says,

"By doctrinal knowledge we do not mean a knowledge of mere creeds. Men may have a very correct acquaintance with all the religious creeds in the world, and still remain the slaves of their animal nature, or the tyrants of their race."—Pp. 56, 57.

In Chap. iv., on "The Scriptural Characteristics of a Christian Church," he does not manifest much respect for the Church of Rome, remarking, with questionable taste, that "it has never yet been demonstrated that Peter was the founder of that *see* of trouble and muddy waters" (p. 62). He denies that the Church of England is a Protestant Church, and gives a note in the Appendix, exhibiting the vastness of her revenues and the scandalous inequalities in the distribution of them. He objects to the Presbyterian and Wesleyan systems of church government, that they assume an ecclesiastical jurisdiction over a number of congregations, not sanctioned by scriptural usage, and proceeds to describe the scriptural character of a Christian Church in the earliest times. His reasoning here seems to us somewhat narrow and inconclusive, since it does not follow that the form of church

that happened to be adopted in the earliest time is necessarily the best for all succeeding times. We may add, with reference to the scriptural standard, that the apostle Paul's maxims, that a bishop (or overseer of a church) must be "the husband of one wife," "not accused of riot or unruly," "not given to wine, no striker" (Titus i. 6, 7), and his rebuke to the Corinthian Church for their abuse of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 20, 21), do not indicate that the state of things then existing had practically assumed a very pure or elevated standard. Though our author stands up for the Independent form of church government, his own work contains examples of the tyranny and abuses incident to it. Thus, in this very chapter, we find the following bitter testimony :

"Narrow-minded, officious, tale-bearing, fault-finding deacons, are the pastor's *tormentors*, the Church's disturbers, and the wolves which scatter and devour the flock. We have known some deacons who have said to the minister of an Independent Church, '*We are the head of the Church.*' '*We are the rulers over it.*' Such deacons are enough to break a minister's heart, and blast and wither every plant in the garden of the Lord. From such wolves in sheep's clothing '*good Lord deliver*' all the Churches which are at this moment withering under their blight." P. 86.

He maintains the following important principles :

"The people have a right to judge for themselves whether what is preached to them is the truth of God.

"They have the privilege to dismiss a minister whose conduct has become immoral, or whose teaching has become unscriptural."—Pp. 98, 99.

He deprecates as unscriptural the imposition of any creed or confession of faith, but maintains the duty of exercising the discipline of the church on immoral or disorderly members. He speaks feelingly, but truly, on the subject of ministers' salaries :

"There are many strong advocates of the voluntary principle who allow their pastors, too often, to starve, rather than live, of the Gospel. We speak this to their shame. The command of the Lord Jesus entitles the minister to his support, and the people are not at liberty to withhold it; consequently, the minister's salary cannot be viewed in the light of a gift, which they may either give or withhold as they please. It is just as much their duty to pay it, as it is their duty to pay the school-master, the lawyer, the draper, grocer, surgeon, or the day labourer; and yet, strange as it may appear, there is no subject connected with the kingdom of Christ to which the deacons and members appear to be so little alive as the pastor's salary. In many places the deacons will call at the pastor's house with a sum of from £5 to £10 per quarter, saying, '*This is all we have had time to collect at present; we shall get a little more by-and-by;*' and so they bid him good morning! He, poor man, must labour and watch for their souls, and the souls of their families, and is left to pay his bills and his debts with his tears, if he *can*; but if he cannot, he must sink. These things ought not so to be. Many Dissenting Churches are very poor, and cannot support

a pastor; but the strong ought to help the weak; the rich ought to help the poor; and this is done in some cases to a certain extent, but we think not to the extent to which it should be done."—Pp. 107, 108.

An Episcopalian, Presbyterian or Wesleyan might say that this last suggestion tells rather against the strictly Independent system of church government, by which each congregation is insulated from the rest, and in favour of some species of union among the several congregations in a district. The following is an important statement of rational views, especially as coming from an orthodox man :

"The primitive Christians were not a set of spiritual magicians, who handled the Word of God deceitfully, and substituted an ecclesiastical apparatus of dead rites and dogmatical propositions, for the spiritual worship of the *Spiritual Father*, whose real children are in all places and at all times the *living reality* of that Christianity which is in itself a spiritual life, and lives in the soul, through the medium and under the influences of spiritual motives and divine attractions. The early followers of Christ were like Him; their affections were baptized into His Spirit. Their discipleship was a practical fact; they were partakers of the divine holiness. The truth, which is but an *objective theory* to the visionary and self-deluded professor, who sins on and still tries to persuade himself that he shall be saved at last, because Christ died to save men, was to them a subjective and soul-elevating reality,—a fountain of strength, hope, and purity. They lived and acted under the highest guidance of love and of law; they were one with God in Christ; and never solicited the aid of some legally or ecclesiastically authorized intercessor to assist them, through the medium of a spiritual charm, to make their peace with God."—Pp. 117, 118.

He thus concludes his description of a Christian Church as it should be :

"This is the Model Church, and this is her Christianity, and it is beautiful as its native skies; pure, like its source; kind, like its Author; fresh, like the dews of the morning; clear and diffusive, like the beams of the rising sun; her touch is life, her look is benediction, her form is divine. We fearlessly ask modern denominations of professing Christians—where have ye laid her?"—P. 124.

In Chap. vi., on "The Churches as they are," he contrasts the largeness of the machinery for religious influence with the smallness of result. In reviewing the different churches, he thinks it is too late in the day for Romanism to regain its power in this country.

"*Infidelity* has an *Intellect*. Let the leaders of society, therefore, look after the intellect: train it properly, treat it kindly, use it skilfully; and we venture to say that, come what may, every form of popery, whether in Roman Catholic or Protestant Churches, will gradually perish on the approach of truth, and disappear as fast as arts and science advance."—P. 138.

He is severe on the sins of omission in the Established Church, gives instances of the gross ignorance in which she has left the

rural population, and broadly states the doctrines which have emanated from Oxford. He laments the divisions and dissensions which have arisen among the Wesleyans and Baptists, and speaks very highly of the character and influence of the Primitive Methodists. Doubtless he knows more of them than we do, but we confess that what little we have had the opportunity of witnessing in their religious services has filled us with disgust. All that he says of the Unitarians is, that they "are growing intellectually, but lacking in the devotional spirit" (p. 151). After briefly characterizing other religious bodies, he enters upon the examination of his own denomination, the Independents. He remarks that "the Congregational Dissenters are the honoured descendants of the Nonconformists and Puritans of former ages" (p. 152), apparently claiming this honour for them exclusively. Is he not aware that the English Presbyterian (now Unitarian) congregations were founded in connection with the ever-memorable 2000 Nonconformist ministers? He contrasts the noble old Puritans with the modern Dissenters:

"That *men cannot serve God and Mammon* is a divine fact. That *wealthy* Dissenters have both the means and the *will* to erect most magnificent and gorgeous places of worship, with their carved pulpits, stained windows, high spires, strong pillars, carved Evangelists in full length, sculptured Judases grasping the bag, and 'pinnacles, niches, mullions, pediments, crockets, angels' heads, and traceries, till we are dizzy, and loose all trace of sublunary things,' is a human fact."—Pp. 153, 154.

Here is one of the blessings of Independence:

"The freedom which members of some Dissenting Churches both in town and country claim, and of which they make a free use whenever anything happens to open a door for the exercise of their brief authority, is that of discord and disorder. We have known deacons who, when asked to state what they had done with certain moneys, subscribed by the Church for the support of the ministry, answered: 'We are the head of an Independent Church, and are not therefore accountable to any one.'"—P. 157.

Our author asserts that

"The *spiritual* and *life-giving Christianity* of Jesus is on the *decline* in the great majority of *Dissenting Churches*. *Men and women* went more *cheerfully*, and *walked more willingly*, to the *fiery stake* three hundred years back, than the Dissenters *will now attend* their *week-evening meetings* for *prayer*. Denominational Magazines are not read now as they were three years back. They have been made to give place to a kind of light reading, which, though moral in its tendency, is by no means a sufficient substitute for the literature that tends to sanctify man's moral nature, and cheer him in his path to heaven."—Pp. 158, 159.

"*Mechanics' Institutions, Mutual Improvement Societies, daily schools and evening classes, are things in which the Churches in general take very little interest.*"—P. 159.

His complaint of the selfishness and unkindness of the ministers in towns towards their humbler brethren in the country, is, we hope, not justified as a general rule. The following statement also, we think, must be a little overdone :

"Texts, words, sermons, and prayers, have all been stereotyped; and in many instances the *sermons of twelve months* might be *preached on the first Sabbath* in the year, and the minister might say to his hearers, You have now heard all that you are to have for the next twelve months, with the *exception of a change of text*."—P. 164.

We are glad to read the following expression of opinion :

"Many of the hymns sung in Congregational and other places of worship are certainly out of date, and ought not to be used as mediums of singing God's praises.

'Vengeance and damnation lie
On rebels who refuse the grace,'—

are not fit words to be employed in praising God. 'Sprinkling the flaming throne,' and 'turning wrath to grace,' and such like expressions, are not true either in poetry or prose. But while such language is unfit for the praises of God, its continued use is calculated to give ignorant persons a very erroneous idea of the character of the Divine Being. It does not become mortals to sing the damnation of their fellow-creatures."—P. 165.

Here is another admission of the evils incident to the voluntary principle and Congregational Dissent :

"Religion, especially in small country places, is frequently made use of as a stepping-stone to a little influence among unsuspecting neighbours; and in this way men who stood on their own level in the world, or at the Parish Church, begin to look upon themselves as persons of consequence; and if they happen to have a little money, they soon begin to act as if they were both the Church and the pastor concentrated within the wide circumference of their own little self. We candidly confess that we should sooner place ourselves in the hands of any Bishop, who is always an educated gentleman, or in the hands of the Wesleyan Conference leaders, than be placed in the grasp of these unfeeling, uncivil, self-seeking, crafty, and tyrannical men, who lord it over both Church and pastor."—Pp. 172, 173.

Our author's conclusion from the whole of his investigation is unfavourable to the influence of Christian Churches and their hold on the affections of the people. In Chap. vii., on "The Churches for the Times," he develops the idea of a union of all Evangelical Christians (including the Evangelical members of the Church of England) in one general denomination of Independent churches; the several ministers preaching in rotation both at the central church and at all the preaching stations, with a large staff of subordinate assistants of all kinds to diffuse the practical influences of religion in harmonious co-operation. He quotes with approbation a passage from the Preface to "The Book of Common Prayer, adapted for General Use," on the grand and impressive idea of a whole nation at once engaged in

offering up the same confessions, thanksgivings and prayers. He confesses, however, that he has no sanguine hope that the Evangelical clergy will give up their State incomes for the uncertainty of the voluntary principle, and charges them with being the great stumbling-blocks in the way of a change for the better, by remaining in the Church, in the vain hope that it may be reformed, instead of coming out and leaving it to perish under the weight of its own corruptions. The Evangelical clergy will not be rendered more likely to come out of the Church by our author's statement, further on, that

"Men of power and talent see very well that Dissenting ministers are so completely at the mercy of their people, as to be *liable* to be *starved* by cruel parties, or *ruined* by the *tongue of slander*; with not even so much as a responsible committee of impartial men appointed to which they could appeal in the hour of fierce persecution!"—Pp. 280, 281.

Our author thinks it a great evil that a youth fresh from College should be placed over a congregation, without the wisdom of an experienced minister to guide him. There is good sense, also, in the following suggestion:

"As we would not settle mere youths over large Churches, otherwise than as assistant ministers or co-pastors, so neither would we *send any young men to any place to be trained* for the Christian ministry, until they had *previously* been *proved as preachers*, labouring under the direction and judicious care of experienced ministers. In this way the preaching talents of young men would be fully proved, and many who are now sent to the different Colleges would never be sent at all; and others, who at present go to College only to become wrecks, would, by this plan, be saved to the Church, the counting-house, the shop, and to their friends. It is a fact worthy of the thoughtful consideration of College Committees, that much money that is now expended on the education of wrecked men, would be saved if these precautions were to be adopted. We do not believe that it is the duty of Churches to subscribe money to educate men for the ministry who are unfit for that high and holy calling, and, therefore, turn their attention, after leaving College, to book-making, and others to scholastic pursuits."—Pp. 205, 206.

The following sounds rather high and mighty from a Dissenting advocate of the voluntary principle and the right of private judgment:

"No splits in the Churches should be tolerated; but if busy-bodies should attempt to make divisions, *they should be left to feel the weight of supporting themselves, and their small man, out of their own pockets*; a thing they would not for any length of time be very likely to do. But while County Associations, and the managers of other funds, continue to aid, and in some instances to encourage little men, these small and unmanageable fragments of Churches will hold on their way, growing weaker and wickeder, until they destroy themselves by beating the air." Pp. 211, 212.

We heartily agree, however, with the following condemnation

of doctrinal trust-deeds, which makes us think that our author must have disapproved of the Lady Hewley suit and approved of the Dissenters' Chapels Act :

"We think that there should be a denominational Model Chapel Deed, on which all deeds should be made, and that each deed should be drawn up, so as to leave Churches at liberty, if, at any future time, a majority of the members and of the regular congregation should, from conviction and choice, resolve to change some of their religious or doctrinal opinions, while they remain sound on the cardinal points, on which the great bulk of Protestants are agreed, still to retain their own place of worship. The practice of chaining ministers down by Chapel deeds, to preach that man cannot repent, and yet must be eternally damned if he do not repent; that Christ did not die for all, and yet that some, for whom he did not die, will be eternally damned if they do not believe that he did die for them; and that God determined from all eternity to pass by some poor sinners, and damn them for their sins, although He never gave them the chance of being saved, is nothing better than a legal document, drawn up to compel such preachers as are willing to sell their birthright for a morsel of bread, to perpetuate religious blasphemy and sectarian bigotry, in the name of that God who gave His Son to become, what he really did become, 'the propitiation for the sins of the whole world' (1 John ii. 2); and who will have 'all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. ii. 4). Dissenters complain, and justly so, of having to support error in the Established Church; and, at the same time, not a few of themselves have their Chapel deeds drawn up so as to compel a man who makes progress in the science of truth, either to relinquish his charge, however much he may be attached to his people, or continue preaching what he believes to be a religious lie. That intelligent men should become Trustees of new Chapels, in which God-dishonouring doctrines are to be preached, is to us inexplicable. Such men are traitors to their own convictions, and guilty of giving a legal sanction to the perpetuation of what appears to themselves to be a system of religious falsehoods. We have been told to our face, before now, that the elect will not be judged according to their works, only the reprobates."—Pp. 213—215.

There is much true thought and Christian feeling in the last chapter, on "The Preachers for the People," whom he wishes to be, not so much "splendid preachers" as men of good constitution and deeply pious. He states as a fact, what we were not aware of, that the poor people of the villages have a fixed antipathy to attend a chapel in any town.

"They would rather go miles out of their way to a village Chapel, than attend a place of worship close by them in a market town. The reason is this: they have been so long looked upon by too many of their employers as an inferior race, and treated as such, as to have impressed them with a strong and fixed dislike to the people of the towns;—hence the difficulty of inducing them to mingle in religious devotions, with a class of persons with whom they have no sympathy." P. 241.

We quite agree with the spirit of the following remarks :

"It is a common, but very serious, mistake to suppose, that the preachers whose lot it is to labour amongst the working classes, need not be so highly educated as their more polished and accomplished brethren, whose vocation it is to preach to the élite of the community. Here we meet with an insinuation, which is intended to teach us, that an inferior article is good enough for inferior beings. But the more ignorant persons are, the greater necessity there must be for an intelligent, well-informed, and educated preacher. *The people can read facts*; and their knowledge of facts prompts them to look to their ministers for the bearing, explanation, and relative value of these facts."—P. 247.

"The preachers who labour among the poor, must not think that anything will do in the shape of sermons."—P. 248.

"It is our opinion, that the reason why ministers have not succeeded more and far better among the people than they have done, is easily ascertained: they preach books rather than sermons. They are so thoroughly mechanical in all their sayings from the pulpit, as to address their hearers just in the mode and style in which they themselves were addressed at College. The people like to listen to the man who can *look into their eyes, rather than into his own dry and technical notes.*" P. 249.

"The preachers for the people, must, if they would succeed, avoid the tame, dull, and heavy style of preaching, so common in many parts of England and Scotland, on the one hand; and the unmeaning rant of the untutored maniac on the other. People do not come to a place of worship to be lulled into a sound slumber; neither do they attend to be almost frightened out of their senses, by showers of fire and brimstone, sudden screams, wild exclamations, and unnatural gestures. Nature should be allowed to be herself in the pulpit, as well as out of it; and the same laws which keep her within proper bounds in the streets, are quite sufficient to guide her in the pulpit. *Good books are good things*, and the preachers for the people should be well supplied with good libraries; *but, after all, the best books are the circumstances in which people are placed—their privations, temptations, struggles and afflictions.* Let these be studied, and really felt, by the expounder of the message of reconciliation, and he will be in a condition to preach so as to interest the masses, and lead them to see that, while he is in harmony with God, he lives in sympathy with his brethren."—Pp. 250, 251.

"It is the privilege of the preachers for the people to teach cheerfulness. To talk to the toiling millions so as to depress them, is only adding to their sorrows. To be happy among them, and to strive to make them cheerful and happy, is the duty of the ministers of the Gospel. There are not a few innocent amusements and health-promoting recreations, in which many of the pious poor are afraid to indulge, lest they should be found guilty in the sight of God. It is the duty, therefore, of their religious teachers to be at the trouble of teaching them that

'Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.'—P. 254.

"We think that this is the best way of thinning the race-course, the jail, the hulks, the ale-house and the gin-shop. It is not by abusing certain evils from the pulpit, or through the medium of the press, so much as by creating a taste for better things, that the people can be induced to cease from evil and learn to do well."—P. 255.

Our author emphatically declares that

"Faith without works is, at this moment, the popular creed of tens of thousands of professing Protestants."—P. 260.

"It is not here denied that the foundation of the penitent sinner's hope is the work of Christ; but we do most earnestly contend that men are not saved simply because Christ died, nor yet because men may say that they believe that He died for them, but because they are led by grace, through faith in Him, to *conform to His character, to live in harmony with the requirements of the moral law, as a rule of thought and action, and in sympathy with Christ and mankind*, and thus grow in their adaptation to that world of perfect spirits in which He lives and reigns, as Head over all things, for the benefit of His Church."—Pp. 261, 262.

Still more plainly and strongly does he speak out in the following passage:

"The world has had just enough of religious twaddle and wire-drawn creeds. Men now sigh for thoughts, and for preachers who are prepared to face the coming storm. The ministers who make man and his sorrows and trials their study, will always have something to say to their fellow-beings, which will both interest and move them. The man who addresses his hearers on the 'great things' of God's law, out of a full and warm heart, with the authority of a real patriot and the disinterestedness of a true philanthropist, and not as the sickly creature made and moulded by the times, will gain a hearing and be listened to with pleasure, while others will be rejected with scorn. Why should not preachers now preach the Gospel through the mediums of facts and parables, drawn from the most stirring events and circumstances with which the people are familiar, in order to gain their ear, reach their hearts, and turn them to the Lord? What we mean is, that instead of confining themselves, as most ministers do in their sermons, to a certain phraseology, with which the bulk of the people are not familiar, they should draw largely upon nature, facts of daily occurrence and passing events, to illustrate and enforce the message of reconciliation. Such a method as this, of sending the truth of God home to the heart, would both interest and convince the people, and lead them, under God, to feel, as well as to understand, the word of truth which liveth and abideth for ever."—Pp. 263, 264.

The following is language which we have not been in the habit of hearing from orthodoxy:

"God is neither a vindictive nor an arbitrary being. His laws are all just, pure, reasonable and holy. If men will live in sin, in practical and known disobedience to law, they must suffer the consequences; the transgressor alone is to blame. The end of all right law is the prevention of crime, and consequently of sufferings; but if men will sin, they must in the nature of things suffer; and all the sufferings which are the consequences of sin, are the consequent of their antecedent;—he that sins *to the end, must, therefore, suffer in the end.*"—Pp. 271, 272.

We have now quoted enough to shew that the little volume under review contains a great deal of matter well worthy of the serious consideration of other Christian Churches besides that to

which the author more particularly addresses himself. If we may infer that his sentiments are shared by a considerable body in his own communion, they indicate, moreover, a prevailing spirit of liberality and good sense, as well as earnestness and piety, shewing how much ground there is which the wise and good of every religious denomination really occupy in common, however widely they may seem to be separated by professed diversities of creed.

J. R.

REV. JOHN GORDON'S LECTURE ON RELIGION AND FREE INQUIRY.

[We are enabled to give our readers a report, substantially if not verbally accurate, of the lecture recently delivered by Mr. Gordon at St. Mary's Hall, Coventry, in reply to Mr. Holyoake's lecture on "Secularism the Positive Side of Free Inquiry." We premise a few words in explanation of the circumstances under which both these lectures were given.

The Mayor of Coventry lately granted the use of St. Mary's Hall for the delivery of two lectures by Mr. Robert Cooper. At the time of his doing so he was not fully aware of the character sustained by Mr. Cooper as a lecturer. The lectures were directed against Christianity. After their delivery, a memorial, signed by the whole of the Church-of-England clergy, was addressed to the Town Council, protesting against the Hall being used for such a purpose. The Town Council took up the question, and acquitted the Mayor of blame, on the ground of his being ignorant of the object of Mr. Cooper's lectures. An application was then made for the use of the Hall in favour of Mr. Holyoake. The Mayor, in answer to that application, referred the question to the Town Council, in consequence of their previous interference with his conduct. A public meeting was therefore held in the Hall, for the purpose of influencing the Council. At that meeting Mr. Gordon delivered a very masterly speech in behalf of free admission to the use of St. Mary's Hall to all persons, on equal terms and irrespectively of religious opinions. This speech (which has been reported in several papers—see the *Inquirer* of Nov. 5) had a considerable influence upon the Council, who, on the matter being brought before them, left its settlement in the hands of the Mayor, declaring their confidence in any decision he might adopt. He gave the permission requested, and on Friday, Oct. 21, 1853, a lecture was delivered by Mr. Holyoake on "Secularism the Positive Side of Free Inquiry." A person of the name of Hepburn, a travelling lecturer on Mormonism, had been sent for, from a distance, in order to reply to Mr. Holyoake; but he proved totally unqualified for the discussion, and after the night in question was hastily withdrawn. Under these circumstances Mr. Gordon delivered a lecture in St. Mary's Hall on the Friday after, October 28. The subject of this lecture was, "That the Religious Side of Free Inquiry is as Positive as the Secular Side." The lecture was extempore, and occupied an hour and a half in the delivery. A colloquial mode of address was adopted, which seemed

to interest the most uncultivated part of the audience in the reasoning advanced. The Hall was crowded, and persons of all professions, religious and anti-religious, were present. The result was eminently successful. The whole body of the Dissenting ministers of Coventry attended, and a vote of thanks to Mr. Gordon was moved by the Rev. J. Sibree, an Independent minister, and seconded by the Rev. W. Rosevear, a Baptist minister.

We desire to congratulate Mr. Gordon and the Unitarian body on this transaction. Free inquiry has been vindicated, and religion, after the discussion of both sides of the question, has been justified. An Unitarian minister has been the accredited and successful advocate of the principle of religion, and has received the earnest thanks of other ministers of religion. How striking the contrast between the clergy of Coventry and their Unitarian neighbour! Had their timid and narrow counsels prevailed, an impression would have been made on the popular mind of Coventry that Mr. Holyoake was silenced by a clerical cabal, who felt that they could not meet him on equal terms; and many would have drawn the conclusion that religion was incapable of defence against his assaults, and his publications would have been sought after with avidity, while the answers to them would be disregarded. Mr. Gordon, on the other hand, has proved that religion not only does not dread, but courts free inquiry. The arguments in its behalf must come before the disciples of Mr. Holyoake* recommended by the candour and fair dealing of its advocate, and the best results may be anticipated from the controversy.—ED. C. R.]

“That the Religious Side of Free Inquiry is as Positive as the Secular Side.” The occasion of this lecture is a lecture previously delivered here by Mr. Holyoake, the subject of which was, *“Secularism the Positive Side of Free Inquiry.”* My title was chosen as being the converse of Mr. Holyoake’s.

The reason of my coming forward to express my sentiments on this subject is, that from circumstances relating to the question of Mr. H.’s being permitted to lecture here, my name has been specially connected with his; and the defence of Religion

* Of Mr. Gordon and Unitarians generally, Mr. Holyoake thus speaks in his *“Reasoner:”*

“Unitarians are somewhat apathetic. First among rationalist Christians, they yet suffer a low sectarianism to warp the souls of the people. Yet free thought, free speech and fair-play are under immense obligations to Unitarianism every where. In the name of the Christian religion, it stands a barrier against bigotry in every town and city.”

“No prosecution of free thinkers in the provinces ever took place where a Unitarian magistrate was upon the bench.”

“When St. Mary’s Hall meeting was proceeding in Coventry, an auditor stepped upon the platform and volunteered what Carlyle would call ‘manfulest’ advocacy of fair-play for all opinions—it was the Rev. John Gordon, Unitarian minister! No voice so powerful and eloquent as his does Coventry hold. The enthusiasm of the meeting honoured the bravery and generosity of the preacher, as an English audience always will where they discover such qualities. The reverend orator did not plead, in the hackneyed language of the universal formula, for civil and *religious* liberty, leaving unreligious or unorthodox or heretical persons to get liberty how they could. He pleaded for fair-play to *all* parties, Secularist as well as Christian.”

in the present case seemed more naturally to devolve upon me than upon any one else. Those who set themselves forth as Christian teachers ought, as I believe, to be prepared to defend religion when its value and reality are impugned; and I could not, therefore, shrink from the performance of a duty which appeared so directly to come home to me as the present one does. I am glad that the question so lies before us, that in what I may say upon it, I shall be under no temptation to come into collision with any on my side of that question who differ from me in religious opinion. I must entreat your indulgence as to the manner I may conduct the business I have undertaken. I have left myself to speak as I may be prompted to do at the time; and I may therefore but imperfectly convey the thoughts I entertain. Some of those thoughts are necessarily of an abstract and metaphysical character, and will require close attention on your part to understand them. Having adopted this mode of address that I may be as plain and familiar as possible, I hope you will not only give me the attention demanded, but grant me the allowance that what I gain in familiarity I may lose in exactness of statement.

Do not suppose that I profess to discuss the whole subject which opens itself to view when the claims of religion are introduced. I limit my notice to that portion of the subject which is forced upon me by the course of observation pursued by Mr. Holyoake. I would recommend, as a valuable assistance to your farther investigation, a book easily procured and very cheap, which was lately addressed, in the form of lectures, to working men. I allude to "*The Philosophy of Atheism examined and compared with Christianity*, by Dr. Godwin, of Bradford."

Mr. Holyoake's lecture was, upon the whole, an admirable statement of those considerations derived from merely temporal interests which conduce to moral conduct. He particularly insisted upon these three points: That morality is promoted by an appeal to the good dispositions of men; by the cultivation of an artistic taste for beauty and order; and by calculations of utility relating to the consequences of conduct.

There was in this nothing new, nor anything peculiar to Mr. Holyoake's system of faith.

So far from being new, these motives have been urged, for the same purpose for which they are now urged, in times long anterior to Christianity. They had in the ancient world full scope for exerting all the natural influence which belongs to them. Mr. Holyoake was wrong when he said, "the Heathens had no means of commending morality to mankind, but by connecting it with their gods." The Heathens connected morality with their philosophy rather than with their mythology; and stood upon exactly the same ground in its defence as Mr. Holyoake does.

So far from being peculiar to Mr. Holyoake's system of faith, these motives are constantly urged in the name of that Christianity from which Mr. Holyoake divorces them. They are incorporated in every system of Christian teaching, and no religious man would think of denying their truth or force.

It was for the reasons here stated that I put to Mr. Holyoake this question: "Should I do you any injustice if I were to assume, that in your opinion the interests of man can be fully pursued without any attention to religious principle: and that, therefore, the secular considerations on which you have insisted, are the only considerations properly relating to those interests?" He went rather a roundabout way to work in his reply, but he did reply, that, as it related to him, such an assumption would involve no injustice. He desired, however, to convey the impression that the opinions thus attributed to him were his individual convictions, as distinct from the objects of the Secular movement he came here to promote.

I cannot accept that as a fair view of the case: for, judging from their written and oral publications, the efforts of the Secularists are directed quite as much against religion and Christianity, as they are in favour of any views of morality with which Secularism may be identified. The adoption of the name of Secularists is indicative of a change of position, partly real and partly prudential: but the same sceptical ends are, as far as possible, pursued under this name, as were pursued under an Atheistical denomination. What is now called Secularism, was not long ago called Socialism, the animating spirit of each being the scepticism common to both.

The positive side of Secularism is therefore not the only side to be considered. It has a negative side, which offers itself to us as more important than the other; and it is to the falsity of this negative side that my present observations will relate.

I have not to prove, in opposition to this negation, that religion is true. To do that, I should advance stronger and more direct arguments than I shall now bring forward. I have only to prove that Religion is, in its nature, as *positive* as Secularism is; and the inference I wish you to draw from my proof is, that those who accept Secularism, because of its positive character, are bound, on the same grounds, to accept Religion also.

Mr. Holyoake's system is expressed in the following formula: "The order of *Nature* is the object of human study; *Science* is the source of our help; and *Morals* are the method of our service." Against Nature I put *God*; against Science, I put *Providence*; against Morals, I put *Religion*; and I assert that these things which I introduce are as *positive* as those opposite to which they are placed. God is as positive as Nature; Providence as Science; and Religion as Morality.

1. "The order of Nature is the object of study."

In carrying out his exposition of this topic, Mr. Holyoake asked, "What is God?" I ask, on the other hand, What is Nature? If we could not answer the question he puts to us, it would be still true, that he can no more define the term under which he expresses the phenomena around him, than we can define the term we employ. What is Nature? Is it a being or a thing? Is it a reality or a mere idea? An Atheist cannot satisfactorily answer these questions. None but a Theist can do so. We meet with no difficulty in stating what we mean by God. We mean that there is an intelligent Being who made and rules the universe. After we have thus defined the term God, we can easily define what we understand by Nature. Nature, then, becomes a mere generalization. So far, therefore, the positive conception of both these representations lies entirely on our side of the case. Apart from the belief in a Deity, Nature is unintelligible.

But it may be said that it is the order of Nature, not Nature itself, that we are called upon to study, and that this is more positive than any conception of God can be. Such, however, is not the case. If you exclude God from your theory, the order of Nature must be eternal. You cannot escape from the idea of eternity without involving yourselves in a contradiction. Either the world had a beginning or it had not. If it had a beginning, some previously-existing being or thing gave to it its origin; and if it had not a beginning, it was eternal. Does any one comprehend what eternity is? Is there anything more positive in your notion of eternal existence than there is in mine? You are obliged to make use both of the word and the idea. When you affirm that there is no eternal God, you affirm the eternity of Nature; and you thus throw yourselves upon exactly the same class of thoughts as are comprised in my conception of a Deity. The question is not as to any difference between positive and negative, but it is as to the reasonableness of the eternity of mind in comparison with the eternity of matter.

Many people erroneously suppose that the most positive ideas we have are those which we derive immediately from our senses. They therefore conclude, that the facts of Nature, as they present themselves to observation, are better understood than the spiritual realities of which we have cognizance. This, however, is not true. Our most positive ideas are purely intellectual. Such are the following: A thing cannot be and not be at the same time. A whole is greater than its parts. A man must believe that of whose truth he is convinced. We ought to do what we believe to be right. All these conclusions are positive enough; and are not these so too? Nothing can come of nothing, and there cannot be an effect without a cause? Now the order of Nature does not more certainly afford us materials for study, than these two last positions lead to the establishment of a Divine existence.

2. "Science is the source of help."

While fully assenting to this doctrine, I have to remark that, in order to become a source of help, science must be embodied in what we call philosophy. We are scientifically assisted in the several departments of human knowledge, by reducing the knowledge we gain into a philosophical form, and making use of it in that form according to its natural application. Now there is a religious philosophy, which is just as truly the result of scientific investigation as is medical philosophy or the philosophy of trade; and by virtue of this religious philosophy, Providence is as positive in its kind of proof, and as firmly established, as anything else on which science can be brought to bear. Such arguments as those which follow are as good as any others of which science may avail itself. They are, indeed, of a strictly scientific nature, and from them the conclusion of an overruling Providence inevitably follows.

1. The established course of natural facts implies the constant exercise of intelligence with regard to them.

2. Natural operations depend upon the existence of a passive force in matter which contradicts everything like self-activity as belonging to it.

3. We have no distinct idea of what force and power really are, but that which we obtain from processes strictly mental.

4. We are conscious of a moral as well as a natural order of things, in consistency with which the world is conducted.

These foundations of the religious philosophy which Nature unfolds to us, are quite unassailable on scientific grounds, and they direct us to a source of help as efficient as that which science, in any other of its bearings, may afford. They lead us to apply the principles of that Divine character, with which they connect the government of the world, so as to furnish us with a basis for trust and an impulse to diligence in all the circumstances of life.

3. "Morals are the method of service."

How is it that we obtain those views of human interest which cause us to place morality in that position with relation to our general conduct which is thus assigned to it? We select from the different propensities of our nature certain tendencies which we call moral, as distinguished from the rest, and we give to these a supremacy over the rest. They are no more natural to us than are our intellectual or sensual tendencies; but we connect with them ideas of authority, obligation and responsibility which we withhold from the others. This Mr. Holyoake does as well as the rest of us. In thus acting, we obey the necessity of our constitution. We cannot help making this classification with this particular purpose of moral duty in view. When we are asked what we mean by authority and responsibility, we must acknowledge that we contemplate some law external to ourselves.

The words we use have no force, unless they bind us to a service independent of our own natural exercises. This law must refer to a being, a thing, or an abstraction; and the question which presents itself to us is, whether or not the existence of a being, in whom the authority resides, and to whom we are actually responsible, does not best meet the wants of the case. I cannot see how the notions of intelligence and will are to be excluded from the circumstances under which the obligations of morality are imposed upon us. Their imposition most naturally implies the operation of a presiding Mind. We are thus brought to the conclusion that the idea of religion is a necessary deduction from that of morality, or rather that the one is included within the other. The supremacy of moral principle cannot be consistently accounted for without the acknowledgment of some superior power to whom we owe allegiance, and who has in this form asserted his right over the nature we possess.

This religious view of the case corresponds with the native suggestions of the human heart and the universal practices of mankind. Religion is proved, by our involuntary feelings and the uniform institutions of society, to be as natural to man as morality is. All history and experience shew that the one is at least as positive as the other. Mr. Holyoake declared himself a believer in the benevolent tendency of all natural arrangements, and expressed indignation against any doctrines which threw discredit upon the goodness in conformity with which the universe had been constructed. Whether is it more reasonable to connect the principle of benevolence with a personal agent, considering it to result from the exercise of will, or to regard it as coming into operation without such exercise? We know nothing of this or any other moral principle, but as it expresses a certain state of the mind.

At the commencement of his lecture, Mr. Holyoake asked many questions, each of which he began with *Why*.—*Why* was I born? *Why* am I here? *Why* do I sustain the relations I do? *Why* does this world occupy its position in the universe? It was strange that, after doing this, he should have said with regard to the question of a God, “That we ought to seek for the discovery of *what* is, as distinguished from *why* it is.” *Why* should I be excluded from a path of investigation here, which I am elsewhere invited to tread? But the *why* and the *what* cannot in the present instance be separated; for the nature and station of God include the strongest conceivable inducements toward the practice of all that is right and good. It is not only true that religion is as practical as morality; but it is also true that religion gives the purest direction and the highest excellence to morality. We were told, that, in the case of a plague, religious exercises would only increase the evil, by the fear they occasioned; but it was forgotten that fear prompted to the employ-

ment of the sanitary measures that were exclusively recommended. It was also forgotten that religion excited hope as well as fear; and that its hopes were especially applicable to the circumstances which have to do with death. When I heard that, in these circumstances, "no prayer could save us, and no church could help us," I could not help contrasting the actual facts which accompanied such visitations of disease in Heathen times, with those which we know to have accompanied them under Christian influences. In the latter instances, religion has been demonstrated to be the truest and best friend of man in his most fearful sorrows and afflictions, and especially gave a deeper and wider influence to human sympathy and kindness than they ever possessed before.

I cordially thank you for the attention you have paid to me; and assuring you that my aim in thus coming forward was not to manifest antagonism to any one, but solely to advance what I conceive to be the essential interests of humanity, I wish you the unspeakable blessing which a faithful endeavour to discover and obey truth and righteousness cannot but confer upon all who make it.

NEW VERSION OF ST. JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE, FROM LACHMANN'S TEXT.*

THIS very neatly printed little volume comprises a new translation of the First Epistle of John, from Lachmann's text, together with critical and explanatory notes by the translator. We learn from an incidental expression of the author, that "a chief reason" for the publication of the work is to give, "in a form accessible to the English reader not much versed in divinity, a faithful digest of the evidence to shew that the text of the three heavenly witnesses finds no place in St. John's writings" (p. 24). This design is very well carried out, the principal points of the evidence relating to the subject mentioned being stated in a clear and concise manner.

In regard to the translation, it is, as we should anticipate, well and carefully executed; differing occasionally from the common version, even when the same Greek text is represented by the two—sometimes differing for the better, sometimes also, in our judgment, for the worse. To take an instance or two in illustration: we do not think the substitution of "merciful" for "just," in ch. i. 9, and in other places, any improvement. There are perhaps cases in which *δικαιος* may be thus rendered; but

* The Catholic Epistle of John the Apostle: translated from the Greek Text of Lachmann, with Notes critical and explanatory. By Benjamin Mardon, M.A. Pp. 36. London—Whitfield.

does not the context, in this instance, require us to take the word in the signification of "righteous," rather than of "merciful"? God is faithful to his promises to forgive (the apostle probably means), and also *just*, or *righteous*, so as to do what properly corresponds to penitence on the side of man. So it appears to us, again, in ch. ii. 1, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δίκαιον, where we should prefer the rendering of the common version, "Jesus Christ the righteous" (or, perhaps, "a righteous one"), to "Jesus the Messiah, a merciful one." In this case, the Χριστὸν, without the article, is probably to be taken as a proper name; and in regard to the word δίκαιος, the conception of the writer seems to be that the character of Christ as *righteous* is what qualifies him to sustain the office of Advocate spoken of. None but one who is himself righteous can be the fit Advocate with God of sinful men; and Jesus Christ was such a person. Compare, again, ch. iii. 7, for a similar rendering of δικαιοσύνην as "mercy," where, however, the contrast with ἁμαρτίαν, in the following verse, seems clearly to require the rendering of the common version, viz. "righteousness."

In ch. ii. 20, we have the following translation: "And ye have an inspiration from the Holy One, and know every man," instead of the common version, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." We do not like the change, and would suggest that the meaning of the passage would be best conveyed by the rendering, *know all this*, i. e. know all that I now say to you to be true. This interpretation appears to be required, as it is suggested, by the following verse: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it." We confess, however, to some hesitation between this explanation and another, viz., know all things relating to Christian truth,—or, perhaps, the special truth which the apostle has now in his thoughts, viz., "that Jesus is Christ." The "unction," or anointment, of this verse, is no doubt to be explained by a reference to such passages as Acts x. 38, where God is said to have anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power; so that the meaning of the apostle is, probably, sufficiently represented by "inspiration," the word employed by Mr. Mardon. The *figure*, however, in which this meaning is conveyed, is lost by the substitution of this word; and the loss is to be regretted, as leaving the passage without its full suggestive power, and insufficient to remind us of such expressions as that we have referred to in the Acts, and that at the commencement of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah.

These remarks apply also to ver. 27; at the close of which, we think, the rendering *him* decidedly preferable to that given here, "abide in *it*." The apostle says, "but as the same anointing teacheth you concerning all things [of which I now write], and is true, and is not a lie, even as it has taught you, abide in

him," i. e. in Christ. (Compare the close of ver. 24, and also ver. 28.)

The remarkable passage, ch. iv. 2, Mr. Mardon translates as follows: "Every spirit which confesseth Jesus as Messiah come in flesh, is of God; and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus, is not of God." Here, however, we submit, *Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν* is again the proper name, denoting the one person, the object of Christian belief. The note before us understands the expression "in the flesh," as alluding to the lowly circumstances of Christ's mortal life.

"The clause is commonly mistranslated, and has been misapplied, both by Unitarians and Trinitarians, to a sect of Gnostics which cannot be shewn to exist at the time St. John wrote this Epistle. He appears to assert a characteristic of the true Christ, that he appeared in this world in mean circumstances (and of course in a mortal body), in opposition to the false Christs, who appeared in pomp."—P. 23.

There does not, however, seem to be any opposition intended, in the mind of the apostle, between the particular *circumstances* of Christ's life and those of any false or pretended Messiah, but rather between the fact that the Christ has really come, and the implied supposition that he has not come. A fundamental assumption of the Epistle is, that the Messiah has come in the person of Jesus. Compare the beginning of the first chapter, where the apostle asserts this, and gives the message which he had received from the Christ. The words "in the flesh," may, perhaps, simply express what we are told in the fourth Gospel, ch. i. 17, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,"—thus alluding also to the higher character of Christ as the divine Logos. "Jesus Christ," in the cited verse, would, according to this explanation, be very much equivalent to "Messiah," and the apostle's intention will be merely to assert that Messiah has come, been manifested "in flesh," as a human being among men. This *may* be all that is intended, and this explanation is strongly supported by the following verse, as read by Lachmann and Griesbach: but yet is it so clear that there is no allusion to the Gnostic sect referred to? Of course, if the translator be correct, in regard to the early date to which he assigns the composition of the Epistle, the supposition of any allusion to a Gnostic sect must be rejected. But we wish that this question of the age of the Epistle had been more fully entered upon. It is one of considerable interest, bearing so immediately as it does on the same inquiry in the case of the fourth Gospel. For ourselves we must say, that we think the very occurrence of these words is evidence for a comparatively late composition; and we are strongly against the slightest attempt to strain the sense—to put a forced construction on anything the apostle has written—in obedience to any supposed necessity for making him write early, i. e. before the destruction of Jerusalem.

On the obscure passage, ch. v. 16, Mr. Mardon remarks,—

“I suppose all must perceive the difficulty which this verse presents, increased greatly by our not transferring ourselves to the apostle's time. The ‘sin unto death,’ perhaps means the rejection of supernatural evidence when submitted to the senses, which our Lord himself declared would not be forgiven in that age or the age to come. Here a person rejected the strongest proofs of divine interposition, so that he could not, while he remained in that state of mind, be converted to Christianity.”—Pp. 23, 24.

The difficulty of the expression must be acknowledged, and we propose with hesitation a somewhat different explanation. In ch. iii. 14, the apostle writes, “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death.” Love is, then, a sign and a condition of life: one who hath not love, or who doeth what is contrary to it, abideth in death. Is not this, then, the sin *προς θανατον*? One in such a state the apostle does not exhort us to pray for; some sins committed by a believer are not unto death,—i. e. do not involve the abandonment of love, the condition of life. These may be prayed for, as there is still the uniting principle of Christian fellowship. But without love, the latter does not exist. The sinful man is cut off, by his own act, from the Christian brotherhood; and its members, therefore, have no ground for interference, are not called upon to pray for him—or rather, for *it*, so heinous, so fatal to its perpetrator, is such a sin, in the view of the apostle.

The translation of the closing words of the same chapter—“We are in the true One, by his Son [Jesus the Messiah]”—gives, we are persuaded, substantially, the sense of the writer. But we should prefer the rendering, “*in* his Son,” as nearer to the apostle's conception. We, being in Christ, are in the true One, because Christ “has given us understanding that we may know the true One.” “This is the true God, and eternal life”—*this*, evidently *not* the *Son*, who has *given* the knowledge of the true God, but that “true One,” of whom the Son has given us knowledge—*He* is “the true God.” It is plain that nothing can be more fallacious than to found an argument for the Deity of Christ on this passage, as Mr. Mardon, in substance, truly remarks.

In selecting Lachmann's text as the basis of his version, the present translator has silently deferred to the principle, so much in favour in some important quarters, of seeking for a genuine New Testament text only in the oldest remaining documents. Lachmann has followed out this principle with more strictness and consistency than any one else—first in his small edition of 1831, and subsequently in his larger work only recently completed. The edition of Lachmann is, consequently, remarkable for the narrow range of the admitted evidence, owing to the circumstance that the number of manuscripts, and other documen-

tary evidences, rapidly decreases as we go backward beyond a certain age. Aiming, then, to present us with the New Testament as read not later than the fourth century, this editor confines himself to a very small number of uncial manuscripts, confirmed, or corrected where necessary, by aid from a few of the oldest Fathers and the most ancient Latin versions. The same principle has been followed, though with much less exclusiveness, by Tischendorf.

The question immediately presents itself, whether, in this case, *oldest* is synonymous with *best*, or with most extensively received, at the date to which the cited authorities belong. It is evident that it is not necessarily so, because a comparatively modern manuscript may be a faithful copy of one which, though no longer in existence, was yet very much more ancient than its representative; and, consequently, if you find in the oldest existing manuscripts readings evidently erroneous, it may be perfectly justifiable, on the principle of the "*bonitas interna*," to correct them from the younger documents, if the latter give you the means of doing so. Now Griesbach, in admitting the evidence of a wider circle of witnesses, appears to us to have followed the sounder principle. We could have wished, therefore, to have been favoured, in the case of this little work, with some account of the positive reasons for setting Griesbach aside in favour of Lachmann. We are satisfied that it is no want of respect or admiration for the former eminent authority which has led our translator to desert him on this occasion. This we sufficiently learn from the terms in which Mr. Mardon speaks of Griesbach, as "one of the greatest benefactors of the Christian Church since the apostles," and of his edition as "in the highest esteem with all persons of competent knowledge in sacred literature" (pp. 31, 32.)

It has been the practice, of late, in some quarters, to depreciate Griesbach on account of his theory of recensions, and the supposed influence of this on the formation of his text. That it has injuriously affected the latter in any important point, should not, however, be assumed as a matter of course. That it has not done so, in fact, may, we think, be shewn. For compare the actual text of Griesbach, as it stands, with either Lachmann's or Tischendorf's, and, as it appears to us, in all really important respects, the former is equal to either of the latter, and, in some respects, decidedly superior to Lachmann's. For example, in Matt. xxi. 31, the latter editor is constrained by his regard for antiquity alone to give us the reading *ὑπερος*, which cannot be correct, instead of the *πρωτος* of the received text, and of Griesbach, subsequently adopted also by Tischendorf. In the Epistle of John, now more immediately under our notice, a comparison of the chief passages in which Lachmann's differs from the common text will shew that, in most of these, the recent editor has already been anticipated by the earlier.

This we believe to be especially true in all matters of real importance ; and we may instance the following, as presenting themselves on a very cursory examination of the two texts : ch. ii. 7, the omission of *απ' αρχης*, in Lachmann, had already been marked as probable by Griesbach ; so in ch. ii. 23, Griesbach inserts, as against the common text, the words *ὁ ὁμολογων, κ.λ.*, also adopted by Lachmann and Tischendorf. The words *και εσμεν* in ch. iii. 1, added by Lachmann, have the appearance of being a gloss, either given as explanatory of the preceding *κληθωμεν*, or else written by one who did not understand that the latter word, according to a Hebrew idiom, might be equivalent to them in sense. Griesbach, more judiciously, as we think, giving the words in his lower margin, with the authorities that support them, yet refuses to admit them into his text, and so Tischendorf after him. In ch. iii. 14, Lachmann's addition of *τον αδελφον* had been marked as probable by the earlier critic ; and in ch. iv. 3 and ch. v. 13, the omission of a portion of the received text by Lachmann had been already made by Griesbach, who removes the words into his inner margin. The number of such instances might be increased, and they would be found throughout the New Testament ; while, on the other hand, we have in Griesbach some readings most probably correct, and recommended by their own intrinsic character, as well as by other considerations, which the adherence to mere antiquity necessarily prevented Lachmann from adopting.

Our readers will remember the very high appreciation of Griesbach's labours expressed by Bishop Marsh, who no doubt represented the prevalent feeling of his time,—a feeling shared also by many since he wrote. The more recent tendency to draw back from so extremely favourable an estimate, we have just referred to. In the face of the acknowledged ability, diligence and good judgment manifested by Griesbach in all that he did, the mere apprehension of the influence of his recension-system appears, in some instances, to be considered a sufficient reason for turning away from his work, as a thing now altogether antiquated and obsolete. We have a case in point in a recent article in the *British Quarterly Review* (August 1853), under the title, "*Critical Editions of the New Testament.*" It is amusing to observe the very summary way in which Griesbach is dismissed by this writer. Having quoted Bishop Marsh's account of the theory of recensions, the reviewer observes, in reference to it : "Happily an examination of its merits is rendered unnecessary, by the fact that Griesbach's system is now as generally rejected as it was once adopted and approved." And he quotes with approbation a passage from Dr. Davidson's lately published "*Treatise on Biblical Criticism,*" which, speaking also of the same theory, concludes thus : "Its credit is indeed gone. Instead of standing the test of public opinion, it has been cast down. In his last publication, the distinguished critic himself

all but abandoned it." (Brit. Quar. Rev. for August, p. 42.) But we venture to submit that some distinction may properly be drawn between the theory of recensions and the Greek text, formed with such exemplary care and learning. What is Griesbach's preference for the Alexandrine and Western recensions, but Lachmann's and Tischendorf's preference for the oldest authorities under a different name? Such being the fact, the tendency and results of that preference must be much the same in the two cases; with this difference, that with Griesbach it was tempered by that wise regard to a larger range of evidence, and to the intrinsic character of readings, which is wanting in Lachmann. Attention to the last-mentioned point is one of Griesbach's leading principles, as much as the mere consideration of antiquity;* so that, on the whole, he appears to combine, so far as it is practicable, the right principles of both theories,—that of going back to the oldest authorities, and that of allowing due weight to the most numerous and carefully-written, though comparatively modern, class of manuscripts. Thus, in short, he may be expected to have got the *oldest* combined with *best*, in as eminent a degree as any of his successors, and more so, indeed, than some of them,—a consideration which ought to have gained him more acceptance with the reviewer, whose main object, throughout the article we have referred to, is to shew that a mere blind deference to antiquity alone is not likely to give us the best attainable text of the New Testament.

The favourable estimate of Griesbach, which we have thus briefly re-asserted, would be tested by an actual comparison of his text, passage by passage, with the respective texts of Lachmann and Tischendorf. We venture to assert, as before, that in all matters of real importance and worthy of consideration at all, in everything affecting the sense, the text of the earlier editor will be found as perfect, as well supported by evidence, as likely, in short, to have been the original, as that of either of his successors.

We hardly know whether the main object of the reviewer, in the article we have mentioned, be to exalt the common, or received, text as superior to that of all recent editions. From one passage, we are inclined to infer that some such purpose, perhaps scarcely acknowledged by himself, was in his mind. Speaking of the propriety of including the cursive manuscripts, he observes: "There can be little doubt that a Greek Testament, edited from such sources, would exhibit, *not* that text which we find in modern critical editions, but one in all important features agreeing with the *Textus Receptus*." As to what are "important features," very different opinions may be entertained; but we venture the assertion that, in the *most* important—in such passages as Acts xx. 28, 1 Tim. iii. 16, 1 John v. 7—no fair esti-

* See the earlier half of the third section of the Prolegomena to his N. T.

mate of evidence, or reasonable regard for the cursive manuscripts, will ever give us a text "agreeing with the *Textus Receptus*."

The writer of this article, in his unfavourable judgment of the uncial manuscripts, and his evident preference for the cursives, which are to restore us the common text, appears to have overlooked one or two important considerations, — considerations which ought, we think, to have modified his conclusions as to the comparative value of the oldest documents. It is not the mere age of the manuscripts that is to be remembered. There is also their agreement, or disagreement, with the Fathers and versions of the earliest centuries. Where this agreement is found, combined with great antiquity in the documents themselves, there can be no ground for hesitation as to the text read in the oldest times. Should the cursives agree too, well and good; but if not, their mere number, or the excellent state of preservation in which they may be as compared with the others, or the circumstance that we happen to know more of their history than we do of the older manuscripts, will be of little avail to give them a predominant authority. Nor is it any stronger argument against the importance of the uncials that some of them are imperfect, i. e. have lost considerable portions, as in the case of the Alexandrine manuscript in the Gospel of Matthew, and the so-called Codex C, which is so much mutilated throughout the four Gospels. Where these oldest witnesses are thus defective, they simply say nothing; but this in no way lessens the credit of what is left.

We must conclude with the observation, that writers on these subjects are apt to use very exaggerated expressions in speaking of the *texts* of different editions, or the different *forms* of the text, represented by different documents. They would seem at times to imply, that really important diversities of meaning or statement are to be met with, amounting to inconsistent or contradictory representations of the facts or doctrines of Christianity. Griesbach himself has given an example of this species of exaggeration, speaking of two of his recensions as differing "*toto suo habitu universoque colore*." It is needless to observe that no such differences are to be found. There is, in fact, a remarkable agreement in sense, if not in sound, throughout the various classes of witnesses; the exception, not the rule, really being, to find a reading conveying any important difference of meaning. To illustrate this assertion, we append a few examples of the differences between the so-called Alexandrine and Constantinopolitan recensions of Scholz, as given by that editor in the Prolegomena to his edition of the New Testament. They are from the fifth chapter of Mark, the numerals referring to the verses:

Constantinopolitan.

Alexandrine.

1. ηλθον.

ηλθεν.

2. ἐξελθοντι αυτω.	ἐξελθοντος αυτου.
απηνητησεν.	ὑπηνητησεν.
5. ορεσι και εν τοις μνημασι.	μνη. και εν τ. ορ.
6. απο.	ὑπο.
ειπε.	λεγει.
9. απεκριθη λεγων.	λεγει αυτω.
λεγεων.	λεγιων.
12. παρχες οι δαιμονες.	οι.
13. ευθεως.	οι.
ο Ιησους.	οι.
14. οι δε.	και οι.
τους χοιρους.	αυτους.
ανηγγειλαν.	απηγγ.
εξηλθον.	ηλθον.

It is evident enough how slight is the real difference between the two "recensions;" and it follows that a text formed even solely from the cursive manuscripts would differ very little indeed, except in comparatively few instances, from one derived only from the oldest authorities. This may be seen at once by comparing the version of the Epistle of John now before us, with the common English version. With little differences of expression here and there, the sense is everywhere substantially the same, three or four remarkable instances excepted, including, of course, the interpolated passage in the fifth chapter.

Finally, if there be one thing of which we may be certain in the criticism of the New Testament, it is, that we do possess, even in our common version (a few well-known passages alone excepted), a very sufficient representative of the various books as they were read in the earliest ages of the Church, and that, if you take the two most discordant forms of the text that can be fairly founded on the available evidences, you will have in *both* all the essential facts and truths of the Christian history and doctrine. This, at least, is one sure result of the criticism of the New Testament; and the knowledge of this suggests or involves this further position, viz. that any future edition of the Greek Testament will be valuable, not so much for the particular *text* which it presents, as for the exhibition of documentary evidence accompanying it; for the manner—lucid, accurate, ample, exhaustive, or the contrary—in which it places before us the materials from manuscripts, versions and Fathers, that may enable us to see and judge for ourselves how little or how great may have been the variations existing in different ages and in different countries, and so gives or withholds the assurance that we must have in *every text*, honestly formed, an adequate representative of the original documents.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

The Philosophy of Atheism examined and compared with Christianity. A Course of Popular Lectures delivered at the Mechanics' Institute, Bradford, on Sunday Afternoons, in the Winter of 1852-1853. By Rev. B. Godwin, D.D. Third Edition.

IN 1834, Dr. Godwin, Minister of a Baptist society in Bradford and Tutor in Horton College in the immediate neighbourhood, delivered and published Six Lectures on the subject of Atheism. They had been called forth by the state of sceptical opinion at the time and in the district. A few years before, the Rev. N. T. Heineken, the Unitarian minister of the town, had published some replies to Carlile in the *Republican*, as well as discourses on a Divine Superintendence and kindred topics. (*Christian Reformer*, 1840, p. 751.) They whose recollection carries them back to the time, will have no difficulty in accounting for the appearance of publications of this class. After an interval of some years, the same necessity recurred; and Dr. Godwin, having meanwhile removed to Oxford, and returning to Bradford, again steps forward to meet it; Socialism, Chartism, Secularism, being the series of more recent growths that have attracted attention. A Town Mission was originated in 1849; in connection with which, the Rev. A. Wallace, of the Scotch Church, now of Edinburgh, but then resident in Bradford, delivered a course of Lectures on the Bible, similarly to Dr. Godwin afterwards. They too were published, and upwards of a thousand copies sold to the working people at one shilling each. Of Dr. Godwin's Lectures, which followed, two or three times that number have been as cheaply circulated among the people, through his own liberality and that of friends. In a district and at a time when scepticism prevails among the newly-awakened working class, it is a most seasonable and valuable aid. The subject being common to all Christians and treated entirely on common grounds, the West-Riding Unitarian Tract and Mission Society has availed itself of the work on the lower terms liberally offered by the author. Two very crowded public meetings have been held in Bradford in acknowledgment to Dr. Godwin,—Mr. Ryland, the Unitarian minister, being, on one of the occasions, requested to propose the vote of thanks.

Dr. Godwin's Lectures of 1834 were published in an 8vo volume, and in the following year an edition was published in America. The Lectures of the present 12mo volume, we are informed, are substantially, though with many alterations and additions, the same. The first two, after introductory remarks, turn upon the general considerations, of Atheism being grounded on doubtful speculations, of not being in harmony with human nature, and of being forbidding in its moral aspects. The next two are concerned with an examination of the several Atheistic hypotheses. We have then four on the proofs of the existence of God from the works of Nature, in which the physical structure of man, his relation to the world which he inhabits, and the relation of the world to the great system of which it forms a part, are considered. The ninth considers objections; the tenth and eleventh treat of the attributes and government of God; and the two concluding lectures compare the Atheistic philosophy in some of its principal features with Christianity,—with Christianity, that is, in its broad religious views and historic

features. The argument throughout is conducted with great care and knowledge, and with illustrations derived from ancient learning and modern science; while the tone and spirit is that of generous kindness and a deepfelt, reverential sense of the theme of discussion. On such a subject it is impossible that the feelings of a religious man can be withheld; and the book has the advantage of a free expression of the heart, after the mind has clearly expounded the satisfactory truth. In this point of view it is free from the evil of mere discussion, which alone is apt to lower the theme it attempts; and as containing the grounds of religious belief in connection with its best fruits, Dr. Godwin's manual, for so it may be styled, may be heartily commended to the great and increasing notice and circulation it has received. We consider its home-felt value and practical outpouring of religion as a great advantage, and the eagerness with which it has been received, is an encouraging proof that the alleged irreligion of the working classes is not founded so much in irreligiosity of nature, as upon a moral perversion which is easily acted upon by merely argumentative leaders, and which may be effectually reclaimed by the moral aspects and appeals of deeper and higher truths. The following extracts will justify our remarks:

"With what a deep and solemn interest is this subject invested! When I look around on the world which I inhabit, and carry my views onward to the vast system of which it forms a part, I am amazed and delighted at the innumerable instances which appear of surpassing beauty and majestic sublimity, of perfect order amidst boundless variety, of well-adapted provisions to accomplish the most beneficial ends; and I ask, Whence all this loveliness and grandeur, and adaptation to the wants and comforts of all living creatures, and especially of man? Come they from a blind chance, or an equally blind necessity? Or is there not, as an instinct seems to tell me, a Being still greater than the material universe, himself the Author of Nature, from whose supreme and boundless glory all these beauties and splendours are but emanations? Is there an Architect of this magnificent structure, whom, though seen only in his works, I may admire and honour, or is the whole frame-work of Nature merely a happy accident? Is there a Supreme Intelligence who is 'the Father of spirits,' whom with love and reverence we may address as 'Our Father who art in heaven,' or is such an idea, so soothing and elevating, only a fiction of the imagination?"—P. 28.

"Atheism, as we have more fully shewn in the second Lecture, *does not, with all its boasted philosophy, meet the wants of man, nor come home to the feelings of human nature. Christianity does, and that in the most effectual manner.* How often does the heart of man feel the want of some superior power on which to lean for help and guidance! There are seasons when, sensible of the insufficiency of all earthly aid, it sighs involuntarily and deeply for support which no human being can render. How frequently does the mind, in its calm and thoughtful moments, look with the eagerness of inquisitive desire on the vast regions of truth, of which it can, by its own unaided powers, know so little, and pant to know more of the past, and the present, and the future, of things visible and invisible, the existence of which is either perceived or imagined! There is something within that indicates responsibility, in a manner which it is difficult to resist, and which feels that a hope of forgiveness is necessary to peace of mind. There are also internal suggestions about a mysterious futurity, and an irrepressible longing after immortality. There is in the soul of man that which earth cannot satisfy, with all the good of every kind which it has to bestow; so that often, in the midst of affluence, and honour, and friendship, and domestic endearments, a something is felt still void and still unsatisfied. At the very time when the heart thrills with pleasurable emotion while contemplating the scenes of Nature, how

often is there mixing with this pleasure a strange feeling of desire and longing after something more beautiful and vast and glorious still! In the midst of everything good and great and delightful, in civil or in social life, in Nature or in Art, whatever relation man may sustain, in whatever situation he is placed, there is an inward pining, a secret longing after an undefined something greater and better and lovelier than all that is seen or enjoyed in this world. These sentiments of the heart, these peculiar susceptibilities of our nature, may be fainter and feebler as man sinks in the scale of rationality; they may be disregarded amidst the hurry of business and the round of dissipation, but they are seldom, if ever, entirely obliterated. They are found in every age, in every climate, in every rank and degree of society, as a part of our mental constitution; and in proportion as man rises in the scale of being, and as he retires from the cares and strife and tumult of life into himself, he is conscious of feelings of this kind. Now Christianity completely meets these wants and feelings of man's nature; it has help for his weakness, truth for his curiosity, and imperishable good for his desires of happiness. It can calm the conscience, silence the fears, and guide the hopes to a blissful futurity. It has objects on which the mind can fix, and, in the contemplation of them, feel all its inward workings and indistinct imaginings respecting the great and beautiful, the awful and the lovely,—satisfied, overwhelmed and delighted. But where is this adaptation to man's nature to be found in Atheism? What has it for any such feelings and sentiments, but a doubt or a rebuke? Man must, under the discipline of a determined scepticism, learn to silence this inward monitor, to repress these feelings of responsibility, to contradict and deny this capability which is felt for superior happiness, to subdue these cravings after immortality and boundless good, before he can cordially embrace the tenets of Atheism or feel satisfied with its unnatural philosophy. In other words, he must, we conceive, do violence to his nature, in order to become thoroughly an Atheist."—Lecture xii., p. 280.

The following is the conclusion of the same Lecture, in which the special reference to the occasion gives greater interest to the appeal:

"Finally, there is this point of contrast to be noticed between Secularism and Christianity, that *the one provides only for this life, forbidding all concern and inquiry about the solemn future: the other cares equally for this life, and at the same time makes provision for the life to come.* Christianity, then, professes to do for man all that Secularism can do, and much more. If Christianity rebukes excessive care and worldliness, it inculcates at the same time diligence and industry. 'Diligence in business' is to be connected with 'fervency of spirit' and 'serving the Lord.' Christianity dissolves no tie, relaxes no obligation of a secular kind, but enforces with additional strength all the duties connected with the various relations of life that we may sustain. And for the practical proof of the favourable influence of Christianity on the temporal condition of man, I refer you to facts which must come under your own observation. Look, then, at the commercial men whose enterprize and business habits have done so much for this town and neighbourhood; has their Christianity paralyzed their efforts, injured their capabilities, diminished their means of earthly comfort, or withdrawn their attention from the secular institutions and improvements of the town, to the prosperity of which they have so largely contributed? Or compare the condition of the members of churches or regular attendants on a Christian place of worship among the working classes, with that of men in the same station, who, whether they are avowed sceptics or not, live entirely regardless of the claims and duties of religion; is it not a general case that those men who make a conscience of religion are better clothed, better fed and better informed, that they less frequently sink into the lowest depths of poverty, than those who throw off all religious restraint? And of those working men who, by their industry, their steadiness and their talent, emerge from the obscurity of their early life, and attain respectability and distinction, is [are] not a fair proportion practical

believers in Christianity? What is there which Secularism can propose, which is rationally worth pursuing or enjoying, which Christianity cannot with far greater power and effect advance? By whom, and under what influence, has all, or nearly all, that has yet been done to better the condition of man and improve human society, been effected? Who, for the most part, have been our greatest scholars, our most successful discoverers in science, our wisest statesmen and most active philanthropists? By whose efforts was our colonial slavery abolished? Who have been the missionaries who have left home and all that is dear in life to instruct and civilize the heathen? Who founded our hospitals and endowed our schools? To whose sufferings and exertions are we indebted for the liberties which as Englishmen we now enjoy? Who are they who by thousands are weekly, and in many cases daily, giving their gratuitous labours, and aiding with their pecuniary contributions, to instruct the youthful mind, to reclaim the vicious to sober and orderly habits, to visit the sick and relieve the indigent? Aye, and further, are not many who are warmly attached to Christianity willing to join with Secularists, or any of their fellow-countrymen, in carrying out any plan which is not visionary or impracticable, by which any class of the community may be benefited, or the well-being of society promoted? Are not Christians bound in the most solemn manner to pursue 'whatsoever things are true, or honest, or just, or pure, or lovely, or of good report,' and, 'if there be any virtue or any praise, to think on these things'? Do what you will, and all you can, as Secularists, to promote the well-being of man, and Christianity will still outstrip you in the race of benevolence, while it adds to the worldly benefits which it confers 'joy and peace in believing,' and 'the hope of eternal life.' Give Secularism what credit you may for the advantages which it proposes to secure in this life, Christianity 'has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'—P. 284.

THE CANON STOWELL.

1. *A Letter to J. H. Budgett, Esq., and another to the Committee of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, on the Rev. Hugh Stowell's Violation of the Principles of Union in the British and Foreign Bible Society, at the Jubilee Meeting in Bristol.* By the Rev. William James.
2. *A Lecture on the Claims of Unitarians to the Christian Name, and on their Right to be regarded as Friends of the Bible, in reply to the Charges of the Rev. Hugh Stowell, &c.* By the Rev. William James.
3. *The Injustice of Denying to Unitarians the Christian Name: a Lecture delivered in Cross-Street Chapel, Manchester, on November 13th, and repeated on November 20th, in reply to certain Charges of the Rev. Hugh Stowell.* By the Rev. William Gaskell, M.A.

AN extract from the Preface of the second of the above pamphlets, will explain Mr. Stowell's claims to our notice:

"On the 18th of last month, a Jubilee Meeting of the Bristol Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society was held in this city, with a special view to interest young men in the effort to send a million copies of the New Testament to China. To this meeting I was invited, with the young men of my congregation. In attending it, I of course supposed that the fundamental law of the Bible Society would be respected, and that no allusion would be made to sect or party. My disappointment, therefore, was great, when I found that the Rev. Hugh Stowell in his speech, not only dwelt upon the disputed points in relation to Romanism and Protestantism, but classed Unitarians with infidels, and pronounced them enemies of the Bible. It was impossible that I could allow such false and injurious charges to remain uncontradicted; but unwilling to disturb the proceedings of the meeting any

further than was absolutely necessary, I waited until Mr. Stowell had concluded his observations, and then requested permission to address the assembly. Expressing my regret that any friend or member of the Bible Society should so far lose sight of its catholic object and principles, as to introduce causes of disunion, and to condemn the opinions of any religious body, I stated that Mr. Stowell had directly violated the primary rule of the noble institution we had met to support, and had characterized as unbelievers, and foes to the Scriptures, men who were as earnest in their love of the sacred volume as he himself could be, and as desirous of its circulation. Most of those who surrounded him, seemed indignant that any one should presume to question the propriety of Mr. Stowell's conduct; and the meeting exhibited a degree of excitement, which it was painful and humiliating to witness. Numbers hissed; some few demanded that I should not be unfairly silenced. But the clamour was very great, and my voice could not be heard amidst the general uproar and confusion. As soon as quiet was restored, the Chairman denied that the rules of the Bible Society had been broken, and decided that I should not speak. Mr. Stowell then rose, and said he was sorry to give me pain; but repeated, in the most offensive manner, and amidst much applause, his charges against Unitarians. Nor was there a word uttered, except my own few sentences, in defence of the clearly defined regulations of the Bible Society. There were members of the Committee and ministers of religion near me, who knew the *wrong* that had been done, but they had not the manliness to protect me from insult, nor the justice and courage to declare their adherence to the laws by which they are professedly united."

Canon Stowell, to whose theological intemperance we are indebted for these spirited defences of Unitarian Christianity, is one of the most prominent notabilities of the English "Evangelical" world. The platform at Exeter Hall is his favourite stage, on which for more than twenty years he has been hailed as a very popular performer. Gifted with a person once handsome, and lungs of large compass, and (to our occasional cost!) incapable of fatigue, and with a constitutional hardihood which makes him, if not incapable of fear, at least impervious to shame, he has all the externals of a public speaker, and if he only possessed knowledge and understood the art of reasoning, might have been deemed eloquent by others than the maiden ladies who haunt Exeter Hall, and the members of Operative Protestant Associations. The Papists have been the chief theme of his oratory, and for thrice ten years he has been cannon-ading Rome and its Pope. It is wonderful, considering how long the subject has been his own, and in how many score of sermons and speeches he has dilated on the topic of the abominations of Rome, that he has never got more than a smattering of knowledge of the subject. A learned friend of ours, after reading with much amusement some violent but blundering *Protestant* speeches delivered at Manchester, remarked to us, "If these men were but tolerably read in ecclesiastical history, they might find every day of the year better weapons than they have ever yet brought to bear against their Romish foe!" It would seem as if frequent talking on religious platforms and at party clubs were fatal to intellectual progress.

"Rattling nonsense in full volleys breaks,
And never shock'd and never turn'd aside,
Bursts out resistless with a thund'ring tide."

The patience of the Canon's Protestant auditories is deserving of some admiration. His topic the same in reality, whatever it is in name, his mode of handling it is from year to year a perpetual repetition. With little power of pathos, and as innocent of wit as any of the heroes of the

Dunciad, he possesses "full forty-parson power" of invective. With more of prudence than of courage, the Canon commonly selects his stage with care, and entrusts himself only to audiences in which he feels a comfortable conviction of the large preponderance of the Evangelical element. To chairmen who wish to be impartial, and to audiences who think it right to hear both sides of a question before they come to a vote, the worthy Canon does not desire to address himself. Some men would be embarrassed, after a long and loud advocacy of Protestant principles, if necessitated to deny to an assailed opponent the rights of free speech and self-vindication. Not so Mr. Stowell. He is ready to accord the right of private judgment to all, provided they always think with him. He hates all Popery and religious tyranny, except his own. He realizes two portraits of the great English satirist:

"Sworn foe to MYSTERY—yet divinely dark,

* * * *

He damns implicit faith and holy lies;
 Prompt to impose, and fond to dogmatize.

No young divine, new benefic'd, can be
 More pert, more proud, more positive than he."

Though always cheered,—and generally in proportion to the unscrupulousness of his assertions and the vindictiveness of his attacks, Canon Stowell has been eminently unsuccessful through life. In Manchester, every candidate for the suffrage of the citizens whom he has supported, has been beaten, and generally by large majorities. The Catholics, whom he has been reviling ever since he became the incumbent of Christ Church, Salford, have increased threefold in his parish. They do not hesitate to say that to his enmity they owe the erection of a goodly cathedral, which gives a name to one of Cardinal Wiseman's batch of Bishops, and which impertinently flouts the Canon's Protestant church. Less frequently, and with somewhat less of bitterness, does Mr. Stowell bespatter Unitarians. Possibly he might by more frequent attacks rouse us to increased zeal and a more efficient organization. Certainly we are indebted to him, in consequence of his insult to Unitarians at the meeting of the Bristol Bible Society, for some very telling and useful tracts by Mr. James and Mr. Gaskell. It is a remarkable circumstance that the discourses of both these gentlemen were repeated on successive Sunday evenings in their respective chapels, so eager were the public to listen to the defence of Unitarian principles in reply to a very foul attack. Mr. James's lecture is spirited and eloquent, and the wide circulation which we hear it is receiving is a satisfactory proof that, whatever may be the habits of the "religious world," Englishmen are not insensible to the claims of fair dealing, and respect the motto, *Audi alteram partem!* Mr. Gaskell's discourse is pointed and polished, and will make an impression on readers who can appreciate forcible reasoning and good English.

In respect to the *fracas* at Bristol, so thoroughly discreditable to the unprovoked assailant, and scarcely less so to Mr. Budgett, the Chairman, whose ideas of justice seem to have been quite paralyzed by religious bigotry, we must make one remark. The whole transaction discloses in men calling themselves religious a low moral sense that is almost shocking. Here was an assembly, met to promote the circulation of the Bible, who make themselves parties to an act which violated the courtesy of

social life, outraged the acknowledged principles of the Bible Society, and was flagrantly unjust. No educated assembly of men of the world would, we believe, have so offended against propriety and fair dealing. No English gentleman, officiating at a political or fiscal meeting, would have refused protection or restitution to a neighbour wantonly assailed, as every Unitarian Christian was by the Canon of Chester. Alas! this is not the first occasion that shews that the practical morals of *Evangelical* circles are, where their prejudices are concerned, much below those of the "unregenerate" world! Too wide is the dissociation of *faith* and *works*! As the Bristol Committee has meanly evaded its duty in this matter, we trust the Parent Committee will administer the requisite rebuke to Mr. Stowell's offensive sectarianism, and to Mr. Budgett's violation of his duty as Chairman. We hope that he will be distinctly told that he ought of his own accord to have vindicated the principles of the Society, and given an equal degree of protection to every member of the assembly, with the conduct of which he was unfortunately entrusted.

Prayers for a Christian Family. By Thomas Sadler, Ph.D. London—Whitfield. 1853.

IN two former publications of a somewhat similar character, Dr. Sadler proved that he possessed, in simplicity of phraseology and deep devotional sympathies, the requisite qualifications for this kind of composition. The work before us indicates greater devotional power and a wider range of topics than the "Silent Pastor" or "Closet Prayers." One very beautiful feature of Dr. Sadler's prayers he himself describes in the Introduction:

"Frequent mention is made, not, I hope, in a manner either unbecoming or to which any one can object, of departed friends. Regarding Heaven as no less real than Rome or Jerusalem, the early Christians, when they had a brother at Rome and a sister in Heaven, or a mother in Heaven and a father at Jerusalem, did not leave one out of their thoughts when they drew near to Him whose children are 'one family in Heaven and on the earth;' and accordingly I have not been unmindful of those of our family who are in Heaven; I cannot ascend in spirit to the very place where they are, and think and feel as though they were not."—P. iv.

The Websters: a Domestic Story. By Edward Whitfield. London—E. T. Whitfield. 1853.

THIS is a very pleasing tale, told with simplicity and nature, every page of which inculcates some useful lesson. Though essentially didactic, it is never dull, and a fine healthful and hopeful morality breathes throughout. A better book for the children's or the servant's library, or the vestry or Sunday-school, we have not lately seen. Temperance, integrity and the kind affections, distinguish the humble hero of the tale, Tom Webster. Contrasted with him is Harris, who passes through the gradations of idleness and intemperance to crime—is transported, but recovers from his moral degradation, and is at the close of the tale reinstated in situation and character. Nor must we forget to notice the portraits of two interesting young women, one the bride, the other the sister of Webster.

OBITUARY.

Aug. 29, at the parsonage-house belonging to the Unitarian chapel, Congleton, the Rev. WILLIAM FILLINGHAM. Mr. Fillingham was born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, March 23rd, 1782 (family Bible), and consequently was a little upwards of 71 years of age when he died. Of his early education, little is known. It is probable that such culture as he received under parental guidance was directed more to the development of his devotional than (after the acquisition of the mere rudiments of learning) of his intellectual powers. His parents were persons in humble circumstances, and were in connection with the body of Wesleyan Methodists, among whom, when a very young man, Mr. F. was placed on what is technically called "the list of exhorters." Whether he was ever a local preacher among that body, does not appear. One remarkable incident in his early life it may be worth while to mention. Passing along a street in Newcastle, not without some portion of the curiosity and close observance that characterize young persons, he watched, with some interest, a gentleman, apparently in the most vigorous health, drive into the yard of the principal inn. Presently, and before Mr. F. had left the neighbourhood of the house, a report was spread that this same individual was dead. Mr. F. returned to the spot, and, under the influence of the same deep interest and sympathy as actuated many other persons, pressed into the house. There he found the traveller (for such he was), not dead, but, to all appearance, dying. The landlady of the house, in great alarm at the idea of a person dying under such awful circumstances without the last offices of religion, urged that a clergyman of the Established Church should be sent for. The traveller raised his hand in token of dissent, and, as soon as he had strength to do so, signified his desire that the Unitarian minister of the town should be summoned. Mr. Fillingham, one of the bystanders, was despatched on this melancholy errand, and speedily returned with the Rev. W. Turner. Mr. F. remained in the room while Mr. Turner performed a religious office with the dying man, who, soon after it was concluded, expired. Witnessing this scene, and being struck with the dig-

nified and impressive manner in which Mr. Turner discharged his duty as a messenger of religious consolation at that awful hour, Mr. Fillingham was led to attend Mr. Turner's chapel, and thus gained his first fixed religious convictions. Adverting, probably, to this circumstance, in a letter to Mr. Turner bearing date July 1828, a copy of which is now before the writer of this notice, and which is in reply to a kind invitation to visit Newcastle, Mr. Fillingham says: "There are none of the scenes of early life that will be more interesting to me than to visit Hanover-Square chapel, and to listen again to that voice which conveyed almost the first rational principles of religion to my mind."

Mr. Fillingham was brought up to the "family trade" of a glass-cutter; and, when but a young man, came from Newcastle to Warrington for the purpose of assisting in the execution of a most elaborate piece of workmanship in glass, intended as a present by the Corporation of Liverpool to the Prince Regent. At Warrington (being now a confirmed Unitarian), he attended the Unitarian chapel, and became acquainted with those zealous and upright men, the Gaskells, under whose auspices he exercised his talents as an extemporary preacher in various parts of the surrounding neighbourhood, and ultimately settled as the minister of Partington chapel, on the banks of the Mersey, Cheshire. Here, his success not corresponding with his wishes, and meeting with opposition from one party of orthodox sentiments who had influence in the society, he remained only three years; and in September 1814, still under the patronage of his Warrington friends, he succeeded the Rev. Theophilus Brown as minister of the Unitarian chapel at Congleton.

But, in the mean time, he had contracted what he himself at a subsequent period of his life called "an early and injudicious marriage," to which many of those privations and deep afflictions which saddened his existence and tried his religious principles to the utmost, may be traced. It is unnecessary, in this connection, to go into details. Respect for the private sorrows of life, and for that profession which Mr. F. by his talents and his virtues adorned, checks the pen which could trace scenes

of poverty and humiliation through which this good man passed, over which charity would weep, and insensibility itself could scarcely fail to heave a compassionating sigh. If the recital were given, it might be summed up in words like these (and let these express, in some faint measure, the severe ordeal through which he passed)—he had twelve children, most of whom, whilst struggling with the evils of poverty to an extent of which the world knew little, he lost in early life. Two of them were cut down in manhood's prime, and the only surviving one has been for seven years the inmate of a lunatic asylum.

Mr. Fillingham was minister of the chapel at Congleton for thirty-nine years. During five years of this period, he supplied at Newcastle-under-Lyne one part of the Sunday, walking the distance (twelve miles) between that town and Congleton, and returning to the latter place for evening service. During a vacancy of the pulpit at Macclesfield for another interval of three years, he also supplied at that place, with great acceptance. About the year 1825, a spirit of infidelity unhappily became infused among a considerable portion of the members of the society at Congleton, with which it required all the powers of Mr. F.'s vigorous mind to cope, and which brought on a state of things so injurious to the condition and prospects of the congregation, that to this time it has scarcely recovered from it. From that time (*audiat, qui aures habet*), Mr. F. never received anything whatever in the way of contribution from his hearers, what small amount was contributed being insufficient for lighting and warming the chapel and keeping it in suitable repair. The whole of the remuneration which he received for his services arose from the chapel-house, part of which he occupied and part of which he let. Here, with not one relative to render him the offices of duty or affection, and with only one person whom he could call a friend to cheer his dying moments, he finally closed his eyes, to use his own words, "in perfect charity towards all mankind, and with full faith and hope of the Divine acceptance."

It must not be omitted to state, that when Mr. F. first removed to Congleton, he held, in connection with the chapel, an ancient school, with a very small endowment, at Eaton, a township about two miles from Congleton. This

school, partly from opposition on the score of his religious opinions, and partly at the instance of W. Smith, Esq., formerly of Warrington, on whose estate it was, he was induced to resign. The estate was subsequently sold to Mr. Antrobus. There is an ancient burial-ground, walled round, contiguous to this school. The school itself is now converted into a "national school" in connection with the Established Church, and a church is about to be erected there. It is probable that originally there was some Presbyterian chapel, to which the burial-ground was an appendage, or, at any rate, that the school-room was used as a place of worship.

When Mr. Fillingham removed to Congleton, he found the religious interest in a very low state there, and the chapel in very indifferent repair, with no means of lighting it up for evening service. On his settlement, these evils were remedied, the galleries were enlarged, the number of the Sunday scholars increased, and the attendance greatly improved. After a changing aspect of things during the long period of his ministry, it is pleasing to be able to say, that for several years past the prospects of the society have been brightening, and that his labours there closed with the satisfactory assurance to his own mind that they had not been altogether in vain, and that the good seed he had sown had produced, and was likely still farther to produce, the fruit of zeal and truth and righteousness.

Of Mr. Fillingham's personal qualities, his humility of mind and amiableness of disposition, it would not be easy to speak too highly. His piety was habitual and without ostentation. He was thoroughly sincere in his words and in his dealings. He was always earnest in the defence of truth, though charitable towards those who differed from him in their views of it. In his heart were seated deep the springs of a sensibility, which, while it made him very accessible to pain from wrongs inflicted upon himself, not only prevented him from ever, in word or deed, inflicting wrong upon others, but led him to sympathize warmly with those who in any way were the sufferers from unkindness or injustice. He was in manners unassuming, and always disposed to pay due deference to those who merited it by their position, their worth or their learning; but his bearing was manly and indicative of self-

respect, and few men could feel more scorn for any behaviour that was mean and ungenerous. But the great feature of his character was consistency of word, act and thought, in such subordination to the high dictates of a pure morality based on a sound theology.

His style of preaching was, as became him, plain and simple, leaving after it a cheerful and agreeable impression on the minds of his hearers; and he was more especially happy and impressive in the devotional part of the service.

At his funeral sermon, preached by the Rev. John Wright, of Macclesfield, the respect felt for his character by the inhabitants of the town in which he had resided, of all denominations, was manifested by the crowded attendance at the chapel; and the words which the preacher took for his text on that occasion, have been more applicable to few—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8).

Sept. 5, at Filton, Shoreham, Kent, aged 87 years, ANN, wife of the late Mr. Samuel LOVE. For upwards of fifty years she was a valued member of the General Baptist church at Bessels Green, in the prosperity and advancement of which she was deeply interested. She was endeared to all who knew her by the virtues which adorned her life, and the assiduity with which she discharged the duties of wife, mother and friend. Her unostentatious piety and benevolence were marked characteristics through a life prolonged to extreme old age, and will be long had in remembrance. Her children tenderly cherish her memory, and are consoled in their bereavement by the thought, that

There is a world above
Where parting is unknown;
A whole eternity of love,
Formed for the good alone:
And Faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that happier sphere.

Nov. 4, in his 77th year, Mr. JOHN BROOKS, of Ashton-under-Lyne, father of Mr. John Brooks, of the same place, solicitor, and twin brother of the Rev. James Brooks, of Gee Cross. He was

brought up in the religion of the Established Church; but being in early life of a philosophical turn of mind, he began to entertain doubts respecting the truth of the doctrines of that Church, especially in regard to the Trinity and Original Sin; and as he had been taught to believe that these doctrines were founded on the Scriptures, he was almost led to question the truth of the Scriptures themselves, and to reject the evidences of a divine revelation. But as his faith was firm in the existence and moral government of God, and his mind had a strong devotional tendency, this state of uneasy perplexity did not long continue; but, like the Bereans, he searched the Scriptures for himself, and he was surprised and delighted to find that for these doctrines there was no foundation in the word of God; on the contrary, he discovered a beautiful harmony between His revealed word and the best conceptions which reason can form of His natural and moral perfections. About the same time, the mind of his twin brother, who had been a circuit preacher in the New Connexion of Methodists about two years, underwent a similar change; and the intercourse of the subject of this memoir with that brother, especially after he settled at Gee Cross, tended still more to confirm the delightful views he had adopted of the unity and fatherly character of God. He soon became a fellow-worshiper with the Unitarians assembling in the Old chapel at Dukinfield, and was on intimate terms of friendship with the Rev. James Hawkes, minister of that chapel, who strongly urged him to devote himself to the ministry, to which he seems to have been inclined, for he did at that time preach occasionally; but it does not appear that he ever sought to take the pastoral charge of any congregation. He continued a member of the congregation at Dukinfield to the close of his life, with the exception of a few years, when he resided at Gee Cross and conducted a school there.

About twelve years ago, he experienced a heavy affliction in the loss of a most amiable wife, who had contributed greatly to his happiness,—a blow which, falling upon him in the decline of life, was severely felt, and called for the exercise of strong faith in the all-wise providence of God, for which he was indeed remarkable. No one could feel a more complete reliance on the ever-watchful care of God over

all his creatures than he did. This was a theme on which he delighted to dwell, and which in every affliction proved his stay and support. Though firm in his own religious convictions, he had the utmost candour towards all who differed from him, believing that the true spirit of religion consisted in a certain frame of the heart, and not of forms of faith, and that it was found amongst all sects and parties, according to the comprehensive words of Christ—"They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

He had a strong attachment to his native village, Mossley; and whenever he visited that place, if he met with any poor and aged persons whom he had known in early life, he always gave them a trifle, and no one could have witnessed the benevolence and joy that beamed in his countenance on these occasions, without seeing in him an illustration of the words of Christ—"It is more blessed to give than receive." In the latter years of his life, he was placed in a state of moderate independence, and he had much tranquil enjoyment in the society of his son and daughter, who, by their affectionate behaviour to him, supplied, as much as children can do it, the loss he had sustained by the death of their mother. He lived to see them comfortably settled in life, yet had the satisfaction of having them still near him, and of accompanying them still, as in earlier days, to the same house of prayer, which he continued to do till his last illness. Blest as he was with much to endear life to him, it was natural for him to wish, as he did, that, if it had pleased God, his life might have been spared a little longer; but his firm faith in the wisdom and goodness of the Divine decrees, prepared him to meet death with humble resignation. His funeral sermon was preached the Sunday after his interment by the Rev. R. B. Aspland, minister of the chapel at which he had attended, from 1 Cor. xv. 24—29. The text had been chosen by the preacher in consequence of a conversation he had with the deceased during his illness, in which the deceased dwelt on that passage of Scripture, as shewing both the greatness of our Saviour's exaltation and his inferiority to God, since his power was a delegated power from God, which, when he had accomplished his work, he would yield up to Him who gave it.

The sermon was full of consolation and hope, setting forth the glory and importance of the Christian dispensation, and it was listened to with deep attention.

J. B.

Nov. 4, at Brighton, MARY, youngest and only surviving daughter of the late Mr. Samuel FRANCIS, in the 32nd year of her age.

Nov. 10, at his residence, West Hill, Stalybridge, in the 65th year of his age, WILLIAM HARRISON, Esq. He was a member of the eminent manufacturing and mercantile firm of Thomas Harrison and Sons. Simple in his habits, and uniformly kind and gentle in his manners, he passed through life respected by his neighbours and beloved by his friends. He was moderate yet firm in his opinions, political and religious. He was interred in the family vault at the Old chapel, Dukinfield, on the 17th of November; and on the following Sunday the funeral sermon was preached by his friend and pastor, Rev. R. B. Aspland, to a very large and sympathizing audience, composed of persons of various churches and of many ranks, from the magistrate and member of Parliament to the working man.

Nov. 16, at his residence, High Street, Leicester, in the 84th year of his age, WILLIAM GARDINER, Esq., the author of *Music and Friends* and various other works. The following discriminating tribute to his memory appeared in the *Leicester Mercury* of Nov. 19, and is attributed to the pen of his friend and pastor, Rev. Charles Berry.

So remarkable a character cannot be suffered to pass without a particular notice. It is unnecessary to record the date of his birth, and the prominent events of his extended life, because they are contained in those volumes which he composed and published in his latter years. Mr. Gardiner was a singular and eccentric individual. I venture to predict that his like will not appear again in this town the next thousand years. There was in him an exuberance of spirits and a vivacity which rendered his company generally acceptable. The writer of these lines has been acquainted with him more than half a century, and bears a willing and truthful testimony to the kindness of his disposition and the excellence of his character. Though possessed of an inexhaustible fund of humour and anecdote,

dote, his wit was never pointed with malice. In his moments of enthusiastic hilarity, I have never known him intentionally to wound the feelings of the humblest person. There was in him an admirable humanity and tenderness towards the life and feelings of every living creature. For many years—indeed, during his whole life—his company was courted by those much higher in station than himself, who were amused by his originality and informed by his intelligence. And, be it said, as it may be with truth, to his honour, that the attentions which he received from those of all classes, political and religious, never seduced him from the path of independence and integrity. He was regularly to be seen in his corner of the pew in the chapel which he preferred, and to which he was accustomed from his infancy; and he never refrained from giving his vote to that political candidate whom he most approved. This is a fact to be greatly admired in a world like this; and the continued attention which he received from those who widely differed from him in opinion, was alike creditable to them who gave, and to him who received such notice.

There were some prominent points in our friend's composition which may be alluded to. His prevailing taste and talent was musical. He inherited it, and possessed it in an eminent degree. If his natural inclinations had not been thwarted by his early situation and commercial pursuits, he must have been pre-eminent in that science; and, as it was, music was his constant study and delight. The musical student and amateur will always wish to possess the many volumes which he has composed upon that subject, and which have extended his reputation beyond the limits of his native country. The present writer willingly records his obligations to his deceased friend in this particular. His acquaintance with Mr. Gardiner has exceeded fifty years; and when he came to Leicester, his friend soon introduced him to the knowledge and the practice of the classical productions of Haydn, Mozart, and Marcello. The young student of any science cannot be too grateful to a judicious guide. It was an infirmity in our friend to be somewhat flattered by the society and the notice of distinguished persons; but, in reply, let it be recollected that he was always kind

and attentive to humble individuals who shewed any indications of talent, and a wish to learn. Many now who are distinguished in the musical world, and some in other branches of science, gratefully acknowledge that they were indebted to Mr. Gardiner for their earliest instructions, and their first stimulus to study and improvement.

Our friend had not the good fortune to enjoy the advantages of sound early education. Candour and justice will ascribe the defects of his character partly to this circumstance. He was often wild in his opinions, and extravagant in his remarks, for want of that information and judgment which early educational discipline would have supplied. But some will maintain that superficial vivacity is better than learned dulness. I think so, and so thought those who so long sought his society. Whatever may have been his early disadvantages, he had a great thirst for knowledge of every kind. He was a member, from his earliest youth, of every society formed in this town for the acquisition of knowledge, and the extent of his information was really surprising. His observations upon the various papers read before the present Philosophical Society were bright and amusing, though eccentric, and the audience were always pleased to see him rise. He was moral and temperate in his habits, and without a spark of malice in his nature. His imperfections, as has been already observed, may be imputed to his early disadvantages. His frugality was the result of misfortune and stern necessity; and let it be considered that frugal honesty is better than careless and extravagant injustice. If any are inclined to allude to his apparent vanity and egotism, let such be reminded of what Mr. Hall once said to me concerning Cicero, when I had spoken of his frequent self-praise:—"Yes, sir, but remember that Cicero had something to be vain of." So had our departed friend Mr. Gardiner. And those may be found, perhaps, to speak disrespectfully of his memory whose society has never been so much in request, and whose loss will never be so justly and universally mourned as his will be. The pen which writes this may have been moved by the hand of friendship, but the head and the heart deliberately affirm the truth of it.

C. B.

Leicester, 16th November, 1853.

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